

Wildest Dreams

AmeliaKat

Star Wars

Complete



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AmeliaKat

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Summary

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Description:

A slightly darker take on Anakin and Padme's passionate yet tragic love story.

1. I'm In Here

Prologue

I'm In Here

I'm in here

Can anybody see me?

Can anybody help?

I'm in here

A prisoner of history

Can't you hear my call? Are you coming to get me now?

I've been waiting for you to come rescue me

I need you to hold all of the sadness I cannot

Live with inside of me

Vader returned from his fight with Obi Wan. Still wearing his broken mask, stumbling across the room.

He finally took it off his ripped helmet and set it aside.

As he sat down, he couldn't shake off his emotions. He was furious, feeling foolish as Obi Wan walked away earlier.

He kept replaying the scene over and over, unable to let it go. Him screaming out his name in defiance, wanting to be heard, wanting to be seen.

He wanted revenge. He didn't want to lose to his old master, but most of all, he just didn't want to be given up on — pitied.

Vader didn't expect to feel the way he did. He thought it would be satisfying to prove he survived it all, to prove his powers were unrivaled.

But he felt nothing of the sort. Instead, he felt even more powerless. But why?

It was more than simply losing to Obi-Wan in a fight. It was what Obi-Wan represented.

Vader had killed that part of him. He erased Anakin Skywalker and all that came with that name from his memory.

And what really bothered him was all it took was an encounter with Obi-Wan to unleash the past.

Vader was more fearful than he wanted to admit. He had closed off that part of his life for 10 years. Yet Obi-Wan had the power to reach in and change that?

Obi-Wan managed to pull out Anakin, and unfortunately for Vader, that meant Anakin's memories would seep through the very strong barrier Vader had built inside his head and heart — or what's left of it.

And things only got worse as he tried to control his thoughts and temper, desperate to ignore whatever Anakin wanted him to remember. As he tried to shake it off, determined to block out the man that lost everything. He didn't know Anakin anymore, and he didn't want to be burdened with his losses. It was too heavy a burden to carry.

He not only didn't want to be Anakin, he couldn't bear to be him, knowing what he lost.

After fixing his mask, Vader did his best to go about his life as normal. He believed that momentary lapse of concentration, where he almost let Anakin's memories seep in where a thing of the past.

He was about to enter his chamber when he spotted a vision from the corner of his eye, and slowly began to head towards it. His breathing, muddled by his mask, was the only sound in the room.

As he made his way closer, he noticed a woman in a long, white, flowy gown. She finally turned around, and much to his surprise, it was none other than...

"Padme." Vader whispered in shock, frozen in his place. He couldn't believe who was standing in front of him.

Padme looked up at him with a sigh. He couldn't quite read the expression on her face. She seemed disappointed, the way a parent would look at you — without judgment.

He began to close the gap between them, raising his mechanical hand in an attempt to touch her. His heart broke a little, being unable to feel her skin underneath his fingertips. His eyes gazed into hers, catching his breath as he tried to work out how she could be standing before him.

Her face softened as she reached up to remove his mask. He flinched at first, not wanting her to see him — but he eventually settled. She finally pulled it off, and smiled. To his surprise, there were no scars. He could feel his fringe that fell across his forehead, he could breathe without the mask. *I must be dreaming*, he thought.

He finally reached for her again — this time, with his left hand as though he never lost it. He cupped her face and finally felt her soft skin. He closed his eyes, breathing her in.

She smiled at him as her fingers entwined in his hair that flowed down the back of his neck — he melted at the touch of her hand on his skin.

“What happened to you?” She spoke softly. Her voice was exactly as he remembered.

“I don’t know.” He paused, noticing he had his old voice back — no burns, no scars, and no need for machines. “I’m — I’m gonna fix it.” He insisted as he pulled her closer to him. He could feel the warmth of her body pressing up against his — it had been so long! He was captivated by her touch, the feel of her hair brushing against his cheek, and the feel of her body as his hands slid down her waist and caressed her curves.

“The damage is done.” She said calmly.

“I’m gonna get him back.” He determined. “I’m gonna settle this once and for all.”

Padme shook her head, knowing he was consumed by his fight with Obi-Wan. Vader studied her intently, trying to work out what she was thinking.

She began to step away from him, leaving him fearful that she would disappear. She exhaled deeply as she took a few more steps back.

“You miss him, don’t you?” She realized.

Vader scoffed in response.

“You don’t want to settle the score.” She declared, “...You want him to come back.”

“No.” Vader dismissed with a flail of his hand, shaking his head.

“He walked away... He pitied you...”

“No.” He growled, tensing up.

“Your one last living connection.” Padme’s voice was firmer than before, making Vader more restless, more fearful, angrier.

“Your final attachment... Gone.” She continued

“No!” Vader roared. In that moment, as he roared, his voice changed. His anger shook the room. He looked down and his hands were mechanical. He reached up to feel his face, the mask was back on, and he could feel his scars sinking back into his face. His hair gone, his voice returned to that mechanical sound.

He looked up at Padme staring at him defiantly.

“I don’t need him.” Vader huffed, stubbornly, as he clenched his fist as the pain from his burns returned, making him more irritated and short-tempered.

“Then...” Padme walked towards him once more, “Who are you fighting?” She asked.

Vader stood there, unable to look at her now. He wasn’t her husband — he didn’t feel like her husband anymore, and she didn’t feel like his wife, and that hurt like hell.

“Let it go.” She soothed. It was though she could hear his thoughts. This only upset him more. He couldn’t let it go. He couldn’t let *her* go.

Vader's breathing echoed in the room. "I *will* destroy him... and everyone else who stole from me — who took you away from me."

"...*You* destroyed me." Padme revealed. He finally turned to face her, and shed a tear as her words cut him.

"Don't say that." He shook his head

"You could've chosen me..." She uttered. Her voice sounded so sorrowful now.

His heart broke a little more as he watched tears stream down her cheeks.

"But you chose yourself." She cried before summoning the courage to regain her composure. "And now that's all you've got." She warned.

With the change in her tone of voice, Vader couldn't bear to hear the words coming out of her mouth.

"Padme," He urged. "Everything — everything I did... I did for you!" His voice grew louder.

"No... you did it for yourself." She sighed as though she had accepted it. She began to fade away.

"Padme..." Vader called for her to return but she had disappeared. "PADME!" He yelled the way he had yelled for Obi-Wan a day earlier.

Vader stood there, realizing she wasn't coming back.

Was she real? No. But this figment of his imagination was his fear. He feared what Padme thought of him now. He let her down, and he couldn't blame anyone else for that part. Anakin's memories clearly wanted to torment him.

In this moment, he knew things were never going to be the same. And thanks to Obi-Wan, the gate he could've sworn was shut, was reopened.

And Vader was forced to remember...

The touch of her hand, every kiss, every time he fell asleep with Padme in his arms. Her long luscious locks, her pink lips, her smile, her big brown eyes, her arms holding him close, kissing his forehead, dancing with him in the middle of her apartment.

(Mature) *Her breath on his neck, the taste of her lips, her soft nibbles on his earlobe, her biting his bottom lip... His finger trailing down her body, tracing her curves, their bodies entwined as they made love, inhaling her moans as his head hovered over hers in the heat of passion, the euphoric feeling of being inside her.*

I'm crying out, I'm breaking down

I am fearing it all

Stuck inside these walls

Tell me there is hope for me

Is anybody out there listening?

I'm in here, I'm trying to tell you something

I'm in here, I'm calling out but you can't hear

2. We Found Love

Author's Note: Thank you for the reviews! I'm so happy to hear what people think
xoxo

We Found Love

Vader struggled to ease his mind, convincing himself what he had convinced Obi-Wan of — that Anakin is gone.

But after 10 years of avoidance, Padme reappearing in his memory was more than he could bear.

Vader tried to meditate, sleep — anything that would help him forget the excruciating pain he felt after being reminded of how much he missed her. His heart began to ache as he remembered just how hard it was to live without her.

Unfortunately for him, it was as though Anakin was playing tricks on him. Little snippets of his old life kept creeping in. He closed his eyes, shaking his head as he tried to block them out, but they kept forcing their way through:

“It’s okay...” Padme soothed as she laid down on the grass, pulling him towards her. He obliged and, as he hovered over her, the tip of his nose brushed against the tip of hers, until their lips met.

Vader shook his head again, as his thoughts gave him a headache, but they weren’t going anywhere. It seemed that when he erased one, another one popped up in its place.

This time, Padme was still lying on the grass, but she was crying. Anakin remained on top of her. He began to feel her squirming underneath him. He looked down and noticed a baby bump growing.

“The baby” Vader remembered. Another painful memory he had blocked out. His child dying inside its mother. Vader groaned in pain as he tried to shut off his mind, but the hits kept coming.

Anakin looked down at the now large baby bump. He then looked back up at Padme. Leaning forward, he tried to soothe her as she screamed. His hand then reached up and stroked her cheek. Ever so gently, his fingers trailed along her jaw and down to her neck. He gazed at her neck before his fingers wrapped around it. With his hand firmly on her neck, she began to choke, trying to call out for him to let go of her.

“Enough!” Vader growled — not wanting to remember any of it, as Padme’s cries continued to echo in his ear. These weird twisted daydreams combined with his old memories were torture — and they belonged in the past.

Unfortunately, the past is not where they planned to stay...

It's like you're screaming, and no one can hear

You almost feel ashamed, that someone can be that important — that without them, you feel like nothing

No one will ever understand how much it hurts

You feel hopeless, like nothing can save you

And when it's over, and it's gone

You almost wish that you could have all that bad stuff back

So that you could have the good

“It’s been far too long, master Kenobi.” Padme greeted him — not knowing who his Jedi padawan was, she shot him a polite nod. Anakin stood there, gazing at the senator. She was even more beautiful than he remembered.

“You don’t remember me?” He smirked

Padme turned to face him, crinkling her forehead. Her eyes then widened as she realized that little boy from Tatooine was all grown up.

“Anakin?!” She gasped, and he smiled in response. “Wow...” She hesitated as she looked up at him — he was so *tall*, so handsome — it actually took her a moment to find her words. “-It’s so good to see you!”

"It's good to see you too..." Anakin, not so subtly, looked her up and down.

And... he's off. Obi-Wan groaned in his head before nudging Anakin back into the present.

"Shall we get on with it?" Obi-Wan turned to Padme and she nodded as they headed over to the couch.

Anakin headed over to pick up Padme from her apartment. As protective as he was over her, and as serious as he was about this mission, he couldn't help but feel a little giddy at the thought of spending time alone with her.

He called out her name once he arrived, but there was no response. He glanced around, slightly worried, trying to sense any danger.

He then headed towards her bedroom slowly, his hand remained hovered over his lightsaber — just in case.

As he entered, he quickly stopped in his tracks as he noticed her shadow outlined behind a changing room divider.

With a breathy sigh, he swallowed a gulp as he gawked at her shadow for a moment while she got dressed.

He quickly walked out the room before he was seen. Sitting on her couch, he attempted to steady his breathing.

"Anakin?" She jumped as she came out of the room. "You're early."

"Thought we'd get a head start." He cleared his throat, trying hard not to stare at her body, after the situation with the *tease* divider.

"Oh." She nodded. "Well, I just have a couple more things to pack."

"I don't the idea of hiding." She said as she packed her clothes.

"I know." Anakin assured, as he stood by her window. "But it'll be over before you know it. Just gotta... do as you're told."

"Not my strong suit!" She boldly stated.

He couldn't help but laugh at her defiance. "That's... not my strong suit either." He grinned.

She stopped to look at him and seeing that grin on his face softened hers.

"...I can't get over it. You're all grown up... *and* training to become a Jedi."

"Yep." He sighed

"You liking it?" She asked as she packed another layer of clothing.

"What? You not being able to get over me?" He teased

“No.” She rolled her eyes. “Becoming a Jedi.” She corrected.

He chuckled at her obvious annoyance before answering, “...I am. It feels right. I’ve got this — I’ve got the talent, the skills... I’m ready for the trials.”

“You’ve got a Jedi’s arrogance too.” She teased him back, as she zipped up her suitcase.

“It’s not arrogance if you’re right.” He smirked.

She gazed up at him and couldn’t help but smile.

It felt a little awkward — a little uncomfortable — as she tried to keep her cool. She couldn’t help but admire how he’d become a *man*. She didn’t exactly know how to talk to him. He wasn’t that little boy on Tatooine anymore — and after this conversation, she didn’t see him as one either.

He began to head towards her, closing the gap between them. She felt nervous, unsure how to act around him. She rarely felt that way around anyone.

As he towered over her, he leaned forward, she could feel his breath on the side of her neck, making her feel a little weak in the knees.

He then reached over, and grabbed her suitcase from the bed. “I’ll take that for you, milady.”

He lifted up the case and smiled at her before turning on his heel.

She let out a deep breath — one that she had seemingly held in.

“Can’t be easy having sworn your life to the Jedi...” Padme began as they ate lunch at a diner. “You don’t get much say in your own life.”

“Well...” Anakin sighed, “You’re usually trained young. Don’t know what you’re missing.” He joked and she chuckled.

“...I guess you just realize that’s your purpose in life.” She assumed.

“We all have a code to follow. It doesn’t matter what your job is, you’ll always have to answer to someone.” Anakin shrugged, “At least as a Jedi, it’s a noble cause. And well, we’re born with a gift.”

“I think I understand... It’s fulfilling enough.” Padme agreed. “That’s how I felt about politics. I felt like I was born for it... until recently.”

She was surprised how easy it was to talk to him. And he listened so intently to her. His eye contact never wavering. “It was all I knew. And it was enough for me.” She continued. “But I remember... this one day, I was with my sister. We get home and her kids run up to her and squeeze her tightly. Their little faces looking up at her with pure joy — so happy their mother was home. And I realized... I no longer wanted to come home to no one.” She lowered her head

“—I’m sorry.” She quickly added, “Last thing you want to talk about is having a family.. you guys aren’t allowed to love.”

“Not necessarily. Love is... actually a big part of our job. Compassion is... love in its purest form.” He paused, “Only attachments are forbidden. We just can’t try to possess those we love.” Anakin exhaled.

“Must be hard... not to get attached to those you love.” She sounded apologetic.

“Yeah... it is.” Anakin’s eyes darted from her to the table. His expression changed as he thought of his mother. Padme noticed but maintained decorum — People from Naboo never pried into others’ personal lives.

“If Obi-Wan caught me doing that, I’d never hear the end of it.” Anakin groaned after showing off one of his Jedi tricks to Padme during breakfast.

She giggled, impressed by his use of the force. “Aren’t you a rebel.” She joked.

She then looked out the window. “It’s such a beautiful day... and we’re cooped up inside.”

“So let’s go out!” He insisted as he jumped up from his seat.

Padme looked up at him, surprised, but admiring his enthusiasm. “I thought I was under strict orders to stay safe?”

“Well, good thing you have your Jedi protector with you, right?” He said as he walked over to her.

She hesitated for a moment, and he observed her.

“Hey, you said yourself. You know this place better than anyone.” He reminded

Padme shot him a sassy glance.

“As I said, you’re quite the rebel, Anakin Skywalker.” She said, shaking her head in a reprimanding manner.

He smiled and held out his hand for her to take it.

“Since when do you follow the rules anyway?” He winked at her.

“I’ve never seen anything like this.” Anakin said as they enjoyed a day in the gardens.

“Really?” She asked

“I didn’t grow up in a place like this, Padme.” Anakin shrugged. “Wherever I looked there was just sand... and then more sand.”

“I’m sorry,” She sighed, remembering his life back on Tatooine where she first met him.

“Don’t be.” He insisted. “I’m here *now*.”

He shot her that cheeky grin of his. She studied him and his carefree demeanor that was so attractive.

“...You have such a good attitude about life. Don’t ever lose it.” She almost pleaded

“Okay,” He sighed with an air of nonchalance. “Guess I gotta do what you tell me, senator Amidala.”

“Are you making fun of me?” Her eyes narrowed in on him.

“No I wouldn’t dare.” He playfully put on an obedient tone of voice.

“Good.” She mimicked his stern tone. “Because I’m tough.” She playfully warned.

“Oh, I believe it.” He nodded with a grin.

“I once punched a boy right here.” She pointed down to the grass. “He was teasing me... said my eyes were too big.”

“Your eyes are beautiful.” He affirmed.

She brushed off his compliment and turned to the side.

“And over there... is where I had my first kiss with my first crush.”

Her eyes looked on, as his eyes remained on her.

“You still talk to him?” He asked

“No. I have no idea where he is actually.” She shrugged with a light chuckle.

“Good.” He quipped

She turned to face him, once again, surprised by his ballsy attitude.

“Oh, Anakin.” She shook her head, unable to hide her amusement “Are you flirting with me?” She questioned

“Nope.” He grinned, pretending to act surprised by the accusation.

She attempted to playfully hit him after his smug comments but he grabbed her hand. She tried to nudge him with her other hand, but he grabbed that one too.

Unable to wriggle her way out of his grasp, they both fell into a fit of giggles.

She was captivated by his effortless charm.

Suddenly, they stopped laughing as his hands loosened their grip on her wrists. His fingers entwined with hers. And that one touch sent a rush through their bodies.

She quickly retracted, brushing off the whole encounter.

“Good.” She mimicked his tone earlier.

After a moment, and a mutual gaze that lasted a beat too long, she broke the silence.

“...So what about you?” She folded her arms. “Who was your first crush?”

“I... don’t think I’ve ever felt that way about anyone.” He leaned back, propping himself up on his elbows in the grass.

“Come on... everybody has a first crush.” She grilled

“Can’t remember.” He pretended to ponder.

“Come on!” She accused

“Okay...” He sat up and leaned forward, and shot her a sharp, long, determined gaze. One that started to make her a little restless. “Honestly? *You.*”

“Be serious.” She groaned

“I am being serious.” He shrugged

She let out a nervous chuckle, breaking off eye contact. She bit her lip, trying to look anywhere but at him. She could feel his gaze remained strictly on her.

“What?” He asked with a half smirk.

“Nothing.” She fidgeted, still averting his gaze

“You nervous around me now, Padme?”

“No!” She tried not to blush. “It’s just. I don’t -...” She struggled to keep her composure and it bugged her. Since when does she act like a giggly school girl around anyone? No one has ever had the power to make this normally poised politician feel that way.

“Stop!” She urged in a playful manner as his head protruded forward, not taking his eyes off of her.

“Stop what?”

“Stop looking at me like that.” She felt uncomfortable. But in a good way. He was the first guy to make her feel like a girl again. A girl who got to experience what other young girls got to: the electricity you feel when meeting someone who sweeps you off your feet — who makes you nervous with flirty banter, who keeps you on your toes as you anticipate the accidental brush of their hand on yours.

“I’m sorry.” He couldn’t contain his grin, lifting his hands up as he surrendered. “Self-control has never really been my forte.”

“Clearly.” She sneered before her lips curled into a smile.

Yellow diamonds in the light, and we’re standing side by side, as your shadow crosses mine

Shine a light through an open door, love and life I will divide

Turn away ’cause I need you more

Feel the heartbeat in my mind

What it takes to come alive

It’s the way I’m feeling, I just can’t deny

But I’ve gotta let it go

We found love in a hopeless place

We Found Love — Rihanna

3. Burst Of Desire

AN:

TroySharpay: Thank you so much for the review! xoxo

Burst of Desire

Over and over I look in your eyes

You are all I desire, you have captured me

I want to hold you, I want to be close to you

I never want to let go

“Please.” The blonde imperial nurse, who took care of Vader, spoke as she entered his chamber and for the first time, saw his face. “You don’t need to hide it from me.”

Vader, already tense as he was very protective of his privacy — never wanting any part of Anakin to be exposed, couldn’t quite kick the woman out just yet. Something made him pause.

“Let me in...” She pleaded softly, always wanting to be closer to him — for him to give in to her, and accept her feelings. “You don’t have to be alone anymore.” She looked into Vader’s eyes, searching for life in them — but they were dull.

She wasn’t afraid of him though. Instead, she began to walk towards him. Vader studied her with a laid-back attitude, watching her as she got closer to him.

He glanced at her lips, her neck, her curves... but he felt nothing.

Well, not exactly nothing. There was one very unwelcome feeling that arose: the reminder of a woman’s love, a woman’s sensuality, a woman’s warmth.

One woman in particular. Padme.

He could try and pretend this that this woman was Padme. But he knew better than that. He could never love another. And what’s more, he could never even grow close to another even for a while. He was doomed to suffer alone in his metal prison.

The more the lady tried to connect with him, the more she reminded him that he will never experience the strong connection he had with Padme ever again. He will never get to see Padme, be with her, touch her, or taste her.

It was a hard truth, and this woman had no business reminding him of it.

With one fell swoop, Vader's lightsaber struck the nurse's chest.

As her body fell to the floor, there was no reaction out of him at the sight of her lifeless body. He casually got up, put on his helmet and headed outside.

Vader looked up at the stars in the sky, and leaned back against the wall.

Anakin leaned back against the wall on the balcony, watching Padme gaze out at the view from the Naboo lake retreat

She turned around, noticing him behind her. She smiled at him before turning back to face the water.

"This is my favorite place to be in the whole world." She began, "It's the most beautiful view."

"Yeah it is." Anakin agreed. She turned around and noticed he wasn't looking at the view at all. His sharp gaze was solely on her.

The way he looked at her made her feel light-headed — she could feel her heart beating in her chest.

He stared into her glistening eyes, and a sweet smile spread across her face. She did a little twirl with her dress — it helped with the dizziness she felt came over her when he looked at her like that.

He smirked, admiring her child-like giddiness.

He began to walk towards her, and held out his hand once he was close. She accepted it, and he then spun her around.

She felt a tingling sensation as his fingers slid down her bare back, his hand then resting on the small her back, pulling her body close to his. He grabbed her arm and placed it over his shoulder and their hips began to sway as one as they danced.

"You've got moves!" She grinned up at him.

"My mother taught me." He said before spinning her around again.

As he twirled her towards him, and caught her once her nose bumped into his, he then dipped her.

She let out a squeal as she fell back. It was a rush. She had literally been swept off her feet.

With his strong arms holding her, she knew he wouldn't let her fall.

He didn't take his eyes off her for a second.

As her hair flowed down, he gazed at her, worshipping the way her neck curved up delicately

He gradually lifted her back up, his nose barely rubbing against her skin as he lifted her. His mouth hovering over her cleavage and she could feel his warm breath on her collar bone as she rose.

Finally, she lifted her head up to his, their lips inches away from each other.

His hand remained on the small of her back, holding her tightly, her hips were now pressing into his so that he was slightly slumped over her.

He looked deeply into her eyes, both of them paralyzed by each other's scent. His lips lightly brushed hers. It was almost difficult for them to part. The little space that remained between them was clouded with their heavy inhalations.

Her lips trembling, his nose firmly pressed up against hers, possessed by their desire.

Unable to wait any longer, his lips crashed into hers.

His tongue entered her mouth, and she allowed him to deepen the kiss.

Engulfed in passion, it felt, for a moment, as though they were floating on air as his tongue massaged hers. Her arms flailed about, feeling a sense of abandon as he kissed her.

She finally managed to gain some control over her urges. She ended the kiss with a "No." and turned away.

Desperate to taste her once more, he was left panting as she created some space between them.

After a series of heavy breaths, she finally spoke. "I'm sorry."

She quickly rushed back inside.

"Padme," He called after her, but she raced over to her bedroom and shut the door.

Taking a moment to gather herself, she ran her fingers through her hair, and caught her breath.

Struggling with her feelings, Padme couldn't understand how easily she had given into her impulses around him. What was so different about him? Why was he so irresistible?

Other than that smile, that voice, those eyes, his laugh...

Padme was forced to tap into feelings she wasn't prepared to. The truth was when you take away the politics, her duties, and her loyalty to the republic, all she was is a young woman who never got to experience reciprocated passion. She had admirers in the past, but none really swept her off her feet. She was always the logical one who kept it together, and it wasn't easy to ignite her fire.

Anakin, though, was unlike anyone she had ever met. He was very passionate, driven, spontaneous, impulsive, and unpredictable — while these traits weren't always the safest, she couldn't help but be drawn to the risk.

Anakin... made her feel alive.

"Hi." Padme breathed out as she entered the dining room.

"Hi." Anakin repeated, looking up at her from the table. She sat opposite him, not saying a word.

“You wanna tell me why you ran off?” He asked, unimpressed

“I needed to think.” She said calmly.

Anakin exhaled, as he scanned her eyes. “You’re thinking too hard.”

Padme breathed out, trying to pass the moment by passing him a plate of food. “Hungry?” She asked.

He ignored her gesture, but continued to stare at her determinedly. “Are we going to talk about what happened?”

She pondered for a moment, contemplating how to answer him — it was difficult to concentrate, given that she could feel his sharp gaze on her.

“...About that. I’m sorry. It shouldn’t have happened.” Padme remained diplomatic, something Anakin wasn’t good at. His reactions were often raw.

“That’s it?” He folded his arms

“It was one silly little kiss, Anakin.” She started to grow frustrated the more he probed.

“It was more than that and you know it.” He insisted.

She feared that he was right and she wouldn’t be able to talk her way out of this one.

Fed up of his glaring at her, she averted his gaze, placed her fork down, and got up from the table.

“Anakin.” She huffed, closing her eyes for a moment, “...It won’t be long now till we’re out of here. So please, whatever happened between us, let it go... for both our sakes.”

“You felt it too. You’re scared, and you don’t wanna admit it.”

“Admit what? We just got caught up in the moment, okay? We danced a little... That’s it!” she snapped.

Now he was frustrated with her.

“Whatever gets you through the night.” He glared at her before getting up from the table and storming off.

Padme headed into Anakin’s room the next morning. She found him stood over the bed, packing his suitcase.

“You’re leaving?” She asked. He turned around to get a look at her before focusing his attention back on his task.

“I’ve informed Obi-Wan to assign you another Jedi for security.” He said without looking back up.

Padme paused before uttering, “If that’s what you want...”

“Isn’t that what you want?” he retorted

“Anakin don’t do this.” She sighed, “We have to get past this.”

“You make it sound real easy.” He hissed

“And you’re not making it any easier.” She remarked

Anakin zipped up his bag and turned to face her. “Yeah, well. Beats being in denial.”

Padme rubbed her forehead. “You just... you get so passionate, Anakin... and one of us has to be strong here. We can’t let whatever this is get in the way of reality.”

“This is real to me.” He drawled

Padme shook her head. “The reality is you’re a Jedi, I’m a senator.” She tried to rationalize it as she walked towards him. She adopted a calmer tone, trying to resonate with him as she looked into his eyes, and stood right in front of him now. “-If -If things were different then maybe... maybe we could’ve had something. Something great even. But we have obligations...”

Anakin once again couldn’t hide his disdain for her words. He began heading to the door.

“Anakin.” She pleaded, walking towards him. “I don’t wanna lose you. I want us to be friends, and if you walk out that door now, we won’t be.”

He finally turned back around and acknowledged her. “What if I can’t be your friend?”

“Anakin...” she groaned, begging for him to meet her halfway.

“No.” He raised his hands, not wanting to hear anymore excuses. “Can you honestly look me in the eye and tell me you don’t have feelings for me?”

“I don’t.” She lied.

Anakin clenched his jaw before letting out a tense exhale. Shaking his head, he turned to open the door to leave.

“Well, that’s my cue to leave.” He said halfway out the door.

“Please... don’t go.” She rushed over and placed her hand on his as he held the doorknob. He looked down at her, and into her pleading eyes. “...If this is the only chance for us to spend time together, I don’t wanna miss it.”

With Anakin and Padme attempting to live under the same roof and ignore their feelings, it gave Anakin time to focus on his training. During this time, he sensed his mother was in danger, and he had to find her. Padme, seeing what this emotional turmoil was putting him through, agreed to go with him.

“Anakin, I’m so sorry.” Padme followed him as he stormed inside the house after his mother’s funeral.

Anakin paced around like a caged animal. She could see it on his face — Anakin wasn't even here right now. It was almost like he was possessed. Like he had unleashed a beast. He saw red. And Padme didn't recognize him.

He grabbed the toolbox in his path and threw it across the room. He then proceeded to use the force to pick up each individual tool and shoot them at wall like darts.

Padme stood there in shock. She had never seen him this emotional, this enraged.

"I knew I should've come back earlier. I had a feeling... and Obi-Wan — everyone told me to ignore it. Said it was in my head!" Anakin's voice was hoarse as he continued to rage on, throwing the last tool at the wall. He then began pacing the room again. His voice traveled right through her, making her jump.

"You couldn't have known." She whispered, treading carefully.

He turned to glare at her

"I DID!" He growled. "They — they had me thinking I was crazy!"

Anakin tried to control his breathing but it only made him sound more maniacal. "But they knew..." His tone of voice lowered, seemingly calmer. Except his calm voice wasn't very comforting to Padme. "They know what I'm capable of... Obi-Wan, he knows. He knows I'm way ahead of him. That's why he's holding me back!"

Padme could see the fury in his eyes. It frightened her seeing him so consumed in anger.

"And if they would just stop trying to control me. I'd be even stronger..." His voice raised. "And I would've been able to get here IN TIME!" He roared

Padme's own breath was just as uneasy, she felt paralyzed in her spot. She could see how unstable he was, as he struggled with his resentment.

"...I killed them all." Anakin began again. This time, it was almost as if he was talking to himself. He stood there, staring out into nothing. Padme slowly walked towards him, looking into his eyes, trying to read him. "And I didn't just kill them. I did what they did. I tortured them... I had this burning desire to make them pay. So I did. And honestly, it felt so good... to finally give in to that."

Anakin let out an exhausted sigh.

"I don't know why it doesn't feel as satisfying now..." His eyes began to well up with tears, and he slowly slid down to the ground. Leaning on the back of one of the cabinets, the rage had gone down, and he was left feeling empty.

Padme didn't know what to do as she watched him. Her head telling her this guy is a loose canon, he's dangerous. But her heart could feel what she saw in his eyes — a conflicted man, who'd been through so much, mourning his mother.

"It's okay..." She bent down to sit beside him, although not without hesitation. "...People — people make mistakes. We have impulses and... sometimes we lose control. But... you have to believe that your worst moment... is not who you are."

“But I’m a Jedi... I *know* I’m better than this.” His teary eyes looked into hers, hoping and appreciating that she could make him feel like this isn’t who he really is. Because right now he felt like there was a monster living inside of him. And only when he looked at her, did that feeling start to fade.

Padme looked down at the floor, contemplating it all while Anakin stared into space.

“Sometimes... people do bad things... terrible things... but that doesn’t always mean they’re terrible people.”

Anakin looked back at her with a glimmer of hope. “You mean that?”

She nodded.

She then reached out and caressed the back of his neck to soothe him before pulling him in for a hug. He allowed himself to melt into her arms. The warmth of her body helped him calm down, and her arms tightly wrapped around him made his heartbeat settle.

He rested his head on her chest and cried.

It had been a whirlwind of emotions. Padme was the friend he needed — perhaps the only thing that truly made him happy still. And while Anakin struggled to let go of the past, Padme made each day easier.

“I never did thank you.” Anakin spoke as they sat on the couch.

“For what?” Padme looked up at him

“Keeping what I did a secret.” His eyes caught her gaze

Padme’s face softened as she shook her head. “Not necessary.”

He shot her a warm smile. *That smile*, she thought. She had been waiting to see it again.

“You know... you can always talk to me. You never have to hide it. I’ll always be here.” She assured, reaching out for his hand and giving it a little squeeze.

“I know.” He nodded. “You’re a good friend.” He squeezed her hand back.

He appreciated her so much, especially in this moment. If it wasn’t for her, he probably wouldn’t have been able to get past everything that happened on Tatooine.

His thumb stroked her knuckles before letting go.

“Well, I’m off to bed.” He sighed, as he got up. “Thanks for... well, everything.” His eyes lingered on her a little longer before turning on his heel and heading to the door.

As she watched him go, she realized she didn’t want him to. “Anakin. Wait.” She got up and followed him.

Taking his arm, he turned back around to face her. She felt nervous now that she was standing right in front of him. She tried to catch her breath, looking up at him with hopeful

but fearful eyes.

"I've got a secret of my own." She trembled

Anakin stared at her intently.

"I lied." She shrugged, "The truth is... I feel the same way — I just didn't want to admit it."

"So.. why admit it now?" He breathed out in a low drawl.

"...Everything's gonna go back to the way it was soon." Padme's voice was quiet, fighting her nerves "...and I just — I didn't want you to leave thinking it all meant nothing."

The silence was broken only by their unsteady breaths. Anakin's body leaned closer to hers. "So what now?" He asked, eagerly

His breath on her lips, they were too close for comfort now. "I don't know..." She shrugged again. "I guess — it just... has to be enough for both of us."

She subtly squirmed away, creating a little distance between them.

"Then why even tell me?" He stepped forward, closing that distance.

"Because... maybe we can't have it. But we'll always have this connection."

He exhaled, reaching his hand out. This only made her more nervous, anticipating his touch. He placed a loose strand of her hair behind her ear. His hand remained hovered over her neck for a moment. Both fighting an intense urge to feel each other's skin.

"Well, I guess there's some excruciating pleasure in that." He said, an ironic smile painted across his face. "But," he continued. He should have kept his hands to himself but his impulses got the better of him. His fingers stroked along her collarbone. The sound of her inhalations grew more obvious after succumbing to his gentle touch.

"You said something before... about missing out." He spoke as that same finger trailed back up along her neck, admiring the feeling of her soft skin under his fingertips. "And... we both know how to keep a secret."

Padme, paralyzed by his touch, knew she should be stepping away any minute now. But her body didn't want to.

"...If this." He continued. "...is the last time we get to be alone like this... let's not let it go to waste." His hand now cupped her face, and lips were so close to hers, they both couldn't breathe.

Padme swallowed a gulp, trying to resist temptation.

"Give into it." He whispered

"I — I don't think we should be doing this." Padme's words were barely audible.

Anakin tilted his head to one side, staring at her mouth as she talked, getting lost in her.

"But you want to..." He suggested. She breathed out once more. Aching for each other, they both felt they were about to burst if they didn't close the gap. "Padme..." He spoke

again. The sound of his voice and the sexy way he uttered her name didn't help.

Finally, his lips brushed against hers, they barely separated to breathe. "Give in to me." He said before deepening the kiss.

Over and over I dreamed of this night

Now you're here by my side, you are next to me

I want to hold you, and touch you and taste you

And make you want no one but me

4. Addicted To You

AN:

TroySharpay: *YAY! That makes me so happy!*

Addicted To You

Your mind is not your own

Your heart sweats, your body shakes

Another kiss, is all it takes...

You see the signs, but you can't read

Your will is not your own

Your throat is tight, you can't breathe

Another kiss, is all you need

Oh you like to think that you're immune to the stuff, oh yeah

It's closer to the truth to say you can't get enough

Anakin woke up in Padme's bed. He turned around to see her sleeping peacefully beside him. It was the first time he woke up feeling satisfied in a long time.

He admired the way her long brown hair fell down her back, and the little flutter of her eyelids as she moaned out in her sleep. He was in a daze, as if he had woke up from an incredible dream.

He reached out and stroked her cheek, feeling her soft skin underneath. His tender touch made her stretch her arms out and wake up.

"Hey..." She said turning to face him with a sweet smile.

"Hey..." He repeated, gazing into her eyes.

"Slept well?" She asked. She thought it would be awkward waking up beside him but instead she felt more liberated than she had ever felt — she felt safe around him, knowing this big, strong man would always be there to protect her.

"Mmhmm." He nodded and kissed her forehead before getting up. "I gotta go check in with Obi-Wan."

“Okay.” She said, sitting upright now.

Anakin turned to face her once he reached the bedroom door.

“Last night was... amazing, Padme.” He drawled before walking out.

Padme let out a slow, cautious breath.

(Mature content)

“Give into it.” Anakin whispered

“I — I don’t think we should be doing this.” Padme’s words were barely audible.

Anakin tilted his head to one side, staring at her mouth as she talked, getting lost in her.

“But you want to...” He suggested. She breathed out once more. Aching for each other, they both felt they were about to burst if they didn’t close the gap. “Padme...” He spoke again. The sound of his voice and the sexy way he uttered her name didn’t help.

Finally, his lips brushed against hers, they barely separated to breathe. “Give in to me.” He said before deepening the kiss.

They breathed into each other’s mouths with each urgent kiss, finally giving into temptation. Padme breathed out soft moans as his hands slid around her waist, pulling her towards him. His lips left a trail of kisses as he devoured her neck, down to her cleavage. Inhaling her scent as his nose became squished into her chest.

He began to remove her dress, letting it fall to her ankles. Stunned as she stood before him, mesmerized by her dainty body. His hands firmly gripping onto her waist as he lowered his head back down to her supple breasts, desperate for a taste. He licked her nipple before taking it in his mouth, devouring it with urgency.

She rested her head back on the wall behind her, losing control of her once steady breaths. She couldn’t feel her legs. Being all wrapped up in him took her completely out of reality. It felt so good to escape with him. The desire to finally become one had finally overpowered them both.

Another soft moan escaped her lips, as he made his way further down her torso. She felt his nose pressed up against her skin until he reached her belly button. Then in one sudden movement, he picked her up. Her legs wrapped around his waist as he carried her to her bedroom.

“Yeah...” Padme breathed out once he left the room. Reluctantly remembering their night of passion. She forced out an exhale, trying not to think about his powers of seduction last night.

Anakin headed out onto the beautiful terrace. He was going through the same tumultuous feelings the morning after. His thoughts were clouded with her — how beautiful she was, the delicate features of her body, and how effortlessly sexy she was in between the sheets, and how it felt when she was underneath him. He had been yearning to make love to her for a long time, but he didn't realize how all-consuming it would be.

He tried meditating, getting himself back into that Jedi mindset after being so side-tracked.

But he didn't have much luck.

(Mature)

Laying her down on the bed, Anakin slumped himself over her, breathing her in as his finger twirled a strand of her hair. His lips found hers once more, and the desperation in their kisses quickly amped up the pace.

With his arms on either side, he stretched up to get a good look at her. Her glistening eyes shot him soft stares, her big, beautiful lips were slightly parted as her heart raced. His piercing gaze remained firmly on her lips, gawking at her.

As their heavy inhales overflowed the air between them, he quickly removed his robes, and wriggled his way in the space between her legs.

With a gentle touch, his finger worshipped her body, grazing down her neck. As his fingertip swept past her collarbone, from one breast to the other, she got a little hazy from the lightness of his touch.

How could someone who was so fierce, so aggressive and dangerous to others, be so tender with her? The subtlety of his touch drove her absolutely wild as his finger continued to make its way down her body, devoted to each curve.

Once he aimed for her hips, she began to squirm underneath him, aching for him in between her legs.

His hand finally slipped between her thighs, and his finger entered her, causing her to yelp. Tantalizing her with every swirl, he controlled her pleasure with just one finger.

Her moans got a bit heavier, and he watched her intently, enjoying watching her squirm. He couldn't take his eyes off her as he played with her, taunting her, until her eyes rolled in the back of her head.

As her back arched, and her hands reached up over her head, he couldn't get enough. The way her body moved was hypnotizing, and he couldn't hold it in any longer.

*He released her from his fingers and quickly slumped himself back over her. Dying to **feel** her himself.*

*Now **he** entered her. Finally giving into his what his quivering member ached for, getting to be inside her. Their hips aligned as he closed his eyes in euphoria. A state so overwhelming, the room got blurry.*

Padme walked out and found him on the balcony.

"Oh, I'm sorry." She began as she saw him standing there, trying to meditate.

"Stay." He said as she was about to turn around. "I do better when you're next to me."

Padme looked up at the tall, gorgeous man who made love to her last night. This was going to be harder than she thought — somehow the plan seemed a lot simpler before anything actually happened between them. Were they ever going to go back to normal?

Anakin finally turned around to face her, snapping her out of her thoughts.

His eyes wandered down her body as she stood there in a silky white nightgown. Knowing that the shape of her elegant curves lied beneath the material made him swallow a gulp.

"Listen I uh..." She exhaled, feeling his piercing gaze on her. "I have to visit my parents. They found out I'm in *'trouble.'*" She almost groaned at the news. She didn't want to bother them with it all. It was her way of keeping them safe.

"I'll go with you." He insisted, walking towards her.

"It won't be necessary." She pulled back, trying to maintain some bit of distance after last night.

"It's my job." He smiled, as he towered over her.

As he brushed past her to enter the house, that skin on skin contact jolted her back into her memory.

He began to thrust into her, and their bodies adopted a shared rhythm. Moving as one, her hands gripped onto his back, as his face hovered over hers. He was captivated by her soft moans in his ear and her warm breath on his lips, making it harder for him to steady the pace.

This rush of urgency consumed him once more, wanting to be as close to her as possible, wanting to overpower her, to have her all to himself. He pounded into her, each thrust more aggressive than the last.

The sensation of him inside her had her moaning louder and louder. Desperate to taste her mouth and her moans, his open mouth remained stuck on hers, as he inhaled her. The rhythm of their bodies grew more intense as he tried to kiss her, missing her mouth with each thrust.

As the overwhelming emotion built up inside them, she moaned out his name — which was music to his ears. Perhaps the sweetest sound he could ever hear. He watched her mouth and the shape it took as she called out his name. He groaned in response, unable to contain his desire for her.

As the pleasure intensified, her screams grew louder, he reached up to cup her chin, squishing his lips into her cheek to try to control himself but it was too late. With a final thrust, a burst of passion as she screamed, he finally released himself.

His head then collapsed, nuzzling into her neck as he remained inside her. He groaned with pleasure, and that sound alone made her toes curl.

Padme remained on the balcony, trying to shake off what she deemed a big mistake. The only problem was, she wasn't as certain as she was before.

*A one track mind, you can't be saved
'Cause baby, young love is all you crave
You can't sleep, you can't eat
There's no doubt, you're in deep
Another kiss, and you'll be mine
Oh you like to think that you're immune to the stuff, oh yeah
It's closer to the truth to say you can't get enough
Might as well face it, you're addicted to love*

Florence and the Machine — Addicted to Love

5. Writing's On The Wall

Writing's On The Wall

*A million shards of glass
That haunt me from my past
As the stars begin to gather
And the light begins to fade
When all hope begins to shatter
Know that I won't be afraid*

The first night back at Padme's parents' house was a little awkward. Both her and Anakin did their best to ignore the spark between them and behave as professionally as possible in front of her family. Although it did sting him a little — for the girl he had slept with a day earlier to jump at the chance to denounce him as her boyfriend at the family dinner.

Her sister knew her all too well though — and she definitely could tell Padme was hiding something.

Once everyone went to bed, Sola eyed her sister, who was standing by the kitchen counter.

"So..." Sola said as she grabbed a stool.

"What?" Padme turned to face her.

"You know what." Sola folded her arms

"No, I don't." Padme seemed to have an attitude, Sola tried not to laugh at the uptight expression that was now painted across Padme's face — she could see her sister was struggling with something in the back of her mind.

"Padme... I know there's something going on between you and that guy."

"No there isn't and shh!" Padme whispered, glaring.

"Come on." Sola rolled her eyes. "I saw the way you two were looking at each other across the dinner table. Can't fool your big sister."

Padme let out a deep breath, feeling slightly insecure. She closed her eyes for a moment, deep in thought as flashbacks of her and Anakin in between the sheets raced through her mind.

"Do you think mum and dad noticed?" She asked

"No, of course not." Sola assured, and Padme began pacing around the counter.

"...I don't know what I'm doing." Padme shook her head as she came to the realization. "I'm trying to do the right thing here. I know nothing can ever happen, it's just—"

"—Whoa whoa, wait a minute! I didn't know you liked him *that* much." Sola interjected, observing her sister. "Padme, this guy's really gotten under your skin... That's a first." Even Sola was surprised that there was any man out there that could actually get inside her sister's head and throw her off balance.

Padme finally sat down opposite her sister.

"I know, I—I've just... I've never met anyone like him." Padme gushed, letting her guard down now that she could finally talk to someone about this. "Every guy I've known was either a politician, senator — these — these cookie-cutter molds. They're all the same. Prim and proper, keeping in line..." Padme let out an exasperated sigh, "And then there's this guy — and he's... NUTS!"

Padme chuckled nervously at the thought of him. "He's the opposite. He's so far off the line!" Padme paused, "And... he's not afraid to show raw emotion, he wears his heart on his sleeve — no camouflage."

Sola noticed Padme light up as she talked about him, and couldn't help but smile at her little sister beaming up at her. But the smile soon faded. "He's training to become a Jedi, though, isn't he?"

"Yeah..." Reality hit as Padme sat with her sister's words.

"So... the only way something could happen is if he left the order?" Sola assumed, and Padme nodded.

"I could never let him do that for me." Padme shrugged in a state of hopelessness.

The next morning, Anakin woke up early and immediately headed out into the Nabberrie's garden. He inhaled the fresh air, and attempted to meditate. He assumed the silence would help but instead all it did was allow his brain to evoke thoughts of Padme and their night together. He could still taste her lips, and remember the feeling of her soft skin underneath his — the sway of her beautiful body, and the sounds of her purring in his ear replaced over and over in his head.

He shook his head, trying to forget about how much he wanted her. He did his best to focus on his surroundings.

But that sheer silence was soon disrupted.

"Beautiful morning." Jobal, Padme's mother, now stood behind him.

"It is." Anakin turned around to face her. "...It's beautiful down here." He added, looking out at the greenery once more.

"Hmm." Jobal nodded in agreement. She studied Anakin.

“So, a Jedi, huh?” She asked, “That’s your calling...” She contemplated.

“Yes, milady.” Anakin answered with a confident yet sweet demeanor.

“Well, I can’t thank you enough for making my daughter’s protection your top priority.”

“Of course.” Anakin nodded — trying not to think about how up in the air their relationship was right now.

Jobal began to notice that Anakin’s thoughts were preoccupied. She did her best to read him.

“...What’s going on between you and my daughter?” She asked out of the blue.

Anakin crinkled his forehead, surprised at the sudden interrogation.

“A mother always knows.” Jobal explained, as though she could see his confusion from the expression on his face.

Anakin paused for a moment before finding the words to say. “She’s a good person. And I’ll do everything I can to keep her safe.”

Jobal smiled as she headed over to the garden bench and took a seat.

“You know... my daughter has always been a compassionate person. That’s one of the reasons she was elected queen at such a young age.” Jobal began. “She cares about people, and the job was perfect for her.”

“I agree. She’s great at what she does.” Anakin boasted.

“Yes...” Jobal paused. “But in some ways, serving others makes you very protective of yourself. Padme often felt the need to hide her vulnerabilities. But... once you get through, you feel her warmth.”

Anakin wondered why Padme’s mother was telling him this. It sounded like she was directly telling him to hang in there.

“Trust me, Padme’s warmth is the first thing people notice about her.” Anakin assured

Jobal turned to look at the scenery but Anakin could see in her eyes that her mind was elsewhere. “I just fear... that one day she’ll be alone, never having a family of her own. And... she might have regrets about not putting herself first.”

“Well... I can assure you she’ll never be alone.” Anakin said, willingly.

Jobal turned to him and shot him a warm smile. “...Being a Jedi is a noble cause. You also choose to serve others above yourself... Guess you and Padme have that in common.” She got up from the bench and proceeded to head back inside. Once she got to the door, she turned to face him once more. “It’s a good thing you have each other.”

“What are you doing out here?” Padme asked as she joined Anakin outside.

“Just thinking.” He replied, staring out into nothing

“Since when?” She joked and he couldn’t help but chuckle.

He glanced at her and, for a moment, they could feel their adoration for each other lingering between them.

Padme then looked down at the ground, and her face fell.

“Anakin...” She breathed out, “Why did you tell my parents I’m in danger?”

“Because you are.”

“That isn’t something they need to worry about.” Padme said calmly.

Anakin tilted his head to one side and his eyes took her in, gazing at her from her head to her lips.

“They’re gonna worry anyway, Padme.” He drawled

“Okay...” Padme fidgeted. “But it still wasn’t your place to tell them.”

“Maybe.” Anakin clicked his tongue as he fixated on her body in a beautiful, baby blue outfit. “But they love you. They want to be a part of your life.”

“This is how I keep them safe.” She insisted, snapping Anakin out of his gaze. He began wandering around the garden.

“Maybe they don’t need you to save them.” He exhaled. “Maybe what they need is for you to not shut them out.”

Padme grew annoyed at how presumptuous he came across.

“Where do you get off making assumptions about my family?” She rebuked. “You can’t come here for two days and act like you know everything, Anakin.”

“I know you need to let them in.” His voice managed to sound authoritative yet calm. But Padme wasn’t pleased.

“And I know that how I deal with family matters is none of your business.” She folded her arms.

“You can’t hide everything from them. They have a right to know what you’re going through, what you’re feeling.” Anakin’s energy now matched her irritability. “You can’t just act like nothing happened.”

Padme shook her head, “Excuse me?! Who said I was? What are you trying to say?” She scowled

“I’m saying at least acknowledge the people who care about you!” He snapped. “Don’t push them away!”

Padme noticed his demeanor shift from calm and collected to tense. “...Are we still talking about my parents?” She glared at him.

Anakin huffed, letting out a frustrated sigh, struggling with the emotional distance between them. “Yes.” He uttered curtly — his voice low, and barely audible, growing more and more annoyed with his unrequited love.

*If I risk it all
Could you break my fall?*

*How do I live? How do I breathe?
When you're not here, I'm suffocating
I want to feel love run through my blood
Tell me, is this where I give it all up?
For you, I have to risk it all
'Cause the writing's on the wall*

6. Lose Myself

Lose Myself

*Can we freeze, come and surrender our rights and wrongs
Can we just for a night let the stars decide where we belong
Maybe heaven right now is a devil or angel away
That won't change
Together we vow that our colors will sparkle the faith*

*And I will find you
I will find you
I will reach you
Or I, I, I will lose my mind
Lose my mind*

Padme and Anakin arrived to her retreat in Naboo. Padme let out an exasperated sigh as she plopped herself on the couch, exhausted. Anakin stood there, watching her after putting their suitcases down.

She looked beautiful, and he couldn't stop staring at her in that leather outfit that hugged her curves. The choker she wore around her neck perfectly depicted the chokehold they both had on each other.

While she was perfectly fine acting like everything was back to normal, Anakin was running out of patience.

"It's not enough." He blurted out.

Padme looked up at him, surprised. "What?"

"It's not enough for me." He said with a shrug. And Padme realized what he was talking about — the one conversation they've both been avoiding.

"Anakin..." She sighed, sitting upright now.

"I can't just be your friend." He said apologetically.

"But... we agreed." She muttered.

"No, you agreed." He corrected. "I've... been suffering."

He let out a stiff exhale while Padme contemplated it all.

"Anakin, we talked about this." She huffed, almost irritated by the whole thing. "It's what's best —"

“—Best for who? For you?” He interrupted. “‘Cause I’m not doing so good.” He began to pace around the room, trying to control his temper. Padme got up about to say something but he continued on. “I think about you when I don’t wanna be thinking about you — when I know I shouldn’t.” His tone was fierce, as though he was mad at himself and her.

He finally stopped pacing and turned to face her. “I see you and... it gets harder and harder to remind myself why I’m supposed to stay away.”

Padme looked at him longingly, sympathizing. “You let your emotions lead you astray, Anakin.” She breathed out. “You need to think about this rationally.”

Anakin almost rolled his eyes at how repetitive he found her to be. He began to head towards her.

“Maybe you need to not overanalyze your desires — to the point that every grain of charm and passion is drained out of it.”

“That’s not fair!” She cried

“No, you know what’s not fair?” He waved his finger at her as his voice raised. ‘Having to be around you day in and day out — “He looked her up and down,” You look like *that* — you’re in my head, you’re in my dreams, and then you turn around and tell me we can only be friends?’ The urgency in Anakin’s voice displayed his anguish. “Like you have no idea how much I want you.” He paused for a moment, gathering his thoughts. “Or maybe you do... you just wanna torture me, is that it?”

“No. Of course not.” She consoled, narrowing the distance between them.

“Then what do you want from me, Padme? Huh?” He groaned, fed up. His arms flailed about. “‘Cause I can’t pretend that we’re cool anymore.”

“Alright, fine, Anakin. Let’s say we do it.” She folded her arms, becoming just as restless as he was. “We get together... It’ll only be a matter of time before you’re kicked out of the Jedi, and then everything I’ve worked for comes crashing down once the affair gets out. And then what? We grow to resent each other? Is that what you want? Because I couldn’t live with that.” She huffed.

There was a moment of silence. She kept her eyes firmly on him while his narrowed in on the floor.

After a beat, the atmosphere was less heated. And Anakin finally spoke.

“Well, there is... one other option.”

“And what is that?” Her piercing gaze never wavering.

“No one has to know.” He said in a whispery drawl.

She stared at him, and he looked down at her. Once his eyes were staring into hers, she didn’t feel so strongly about her convictions anymore. His gaze made her weaker. The sound of their breaths were amplified by the silence and limited space between them.

“Anakin...” She whispered. I can’t — we can’t do that.”

He raised his hands to lightly cup her face. “Padme, listen to me.” His mouth hovering so closely over hers, she could feel his breath on her lips. “I can’t walk away now. You’re in me and I’m in you whether we like it or not.”

Padme tried to turn her head away from him, as the touch of his fingers stroking against the sides of her neck sent a tingling sensation through her body. However no matter which way she turned, his head followed hers, and his lips chased after hers, hovering over her.

“I know it’s risky.” He continued. His raspy voice called to her. This time she stopped trying to squirm away. She didn’t have the discipline to fight it anymore. “But the only thing worse, is not being with you.”

His hand reached up to stroke her hair — his fingers now tugging on her braid. She inhaled deeply, like she had to remind herself to breathe.

“It’s torture trying to stay away from you, Padme.” His forehead now rested on top of hers, pleading for her to let him in. He was almost begging for her.

With his hand in her hair, she too found it hard to remember why they were supposed to stay away from each other. And his words, his dreamy words, made her desperately want to give in.

“I gotta have you.” He whispered — his lips almost touching hers at this point. “You have a piece of my soul. I can’t breathe without you...” Desperate to taste her, he whispered into her mouth, “I can’t live without you now.” And finally stole a kiss.

Vader paced around in his fortress. His heart ached. He was in agony, reminiscing about the past after shutting it out for so long. He was missing Padme so much.

The memories of them falling in love tormented him. He almost wished he could go back and work harder to erase them before it got this far.

He felt this burning urge to find a way to bring her back. He just wanted to feel her presence again.

As Anakin’s memories continued to replay in his mind, he remembered the first time Padme ever told him she loved him in Geonosis when they went to rescue Obi-Wan.

Somehow, no matter how successful he was at blocking those memories out, they seeped back in and he remembered it all like it was yesterday. He felt ashamed at how quickly his memory bounced back after years of discipline.

“I love you.” Padme whispered as they were about to be led to their execution. Anakin turned to face her, surprised and relieved to finally hear her say those words. ‘I have this whole time. I was just too much of a coward to admit it.’ She cried, “But I do. I love you... And I just want you to know.”

I love you

I love you

I love you

Padme's words echoed in Vader's ear — making him angrier as he ached to silence it as much as he yearned to hear it.

Vader knew one thing was for sure: he needed her back. He needed her now.

That same impulsivity he always had overcame Vader. That recklessness and desperation to do what he wants and to take control. He was determined to do everything he could to resurrect her.

That impulsively and recklessness were the same traits that got his arm cut off when he and Obi-Wan faced off with Dooku.

When the fight was over, Padme rushed over to him, terrified by the sight she had just seen.

She hugged him tightly, and he rested his head on hers. Somehow her presence helped with the stinging pain of losing his arm.

Yoda glanced at Obi-Wan once they had both gotten up. He gestured for him to come outside with him.

"Close, they have become." Yoda began

Obi-Wan still catching his breath after the duel, looked from the hangar back to Yoda. "He's been staying with her for weeks. They've become close friends." Obi-Wan did his best to not read into it too much — not only in front of Yoda, but for Anakin's sake right now.

Vader remembered the Sith Momin — the one he killed after promising to lead Vader to the pathway that would bring Padme back to life. Vader designed his fortress to do just that but Momin used Vader's powers to resurrect himself.

Vader remembered failing to resurrect Padme in that moment. And decided it was time to take what he learned and try again. Even though, a voice inside kept doubting him. Perhaps it was what remained of Anakin, having no faith that this time, he would bring her back —

afraid to be disappointed again. He couldn't find hope only to lose it again, and lose her again.

You will lose yourself trying to rewrite the past, Lord Vader. You can try but... It's dangerous to manipulate the force for selfish reasons. The person you seek, will not be the person you remember. And they may never return.

"Anakin!" Padme gasped as she inspected his arm.

Wrapping his one arm around her, he tried to calm her down.

"Why did you do that?!" She pleaded anxiously. "Why didn't you listen to Obi-Wan? This could have been even worse! You could have been killed!"

"Don't worry." He groaned, trying to ignore the pain as he smiled at her. "He can take my arm. Hell, he could take my legs and I'd still crawl to you." He joked, lightening the mood.

But Padme wasn't amused, she was worried.

"Are you alright at least?" She asked, caressing the back of his neck.

"I will be..." He said, leaning his head on hers once more.

"I was so worried." She shook her head, "I — I couldn't bear if anything happened to you." She spoke as though she had just come to the realization that she too couldn't live without him.

He gazed into her eyes that were filled with uncertainty, as she surprised herself with how fearful she would be if she had lost him today.

He reached out and stroked her cheek with his thumb.

"Marry me." He uttered.

*I stared up at the sun
Thought of all the people,
places and things I've loved*

*You can feel the light start to tremble
Washing what you know out to sea
You can see your life out of the window, tonight*

*If I lose myself tonight
It'll be by your side
If I lose myself tonight*

*If I lose myself tonight
It'll be you and I
Lose myself tonight*

Calling (Lose my mind) by Alesso and Sebastian Ingrosso & If I lose myself by Alesso
and One Republic — Mashup

7. Mad In Wonderland

AN: Selense: Thank you! So glad you like it!

TroySharpay: Wow! Appreciate your reviews very much! Thank you!

Mad in Wonderland

*Flashing lights, and we
Took a wrong turn, and we
Fell down a rabbit hole
You held on tight to me
'Cause nothing's as it seems
Spinning out of control
Didn't they tell us don't rush into things
Didn't you flash your blue eyes at me
Haven't you heard what becomes of curious minds
Ooh didn't it all seem new and exciting
I felt your arms twisting around me
Didn't you calm my fears with a cheshire cat smile
It's all fun and games 'til somebody loses their mind
I should've slept with one eye open at night*

Anakin and Padme were on her ship, heading back to Naboo from Geonosis.

After everything that happened, they both knew things were different.

"Anakin..." She finally spoke, ready to address their conversation at Dooku's hangar. "We need to talk."

Anakin walked over and sat opposite her as she was flying the ship.

"What?" He said once he slumped himself in the chair. "Were you gonna tell me you love me again?" He teased

“You know what, I said that because I thought we were about to die.” She teased back.

“We both know better than that.” He shot her that sexy half smirk.

Padme did her best not to look amused. “...You know, you are so—” She pondered, clenching her jaw.

“Charming? Handsome? Right?” He proposed.

Padme shot him a sharp glance before sneering, “Self-obsessed.”

Anakin’s smirk turned into a full grin now. “I only have one obsession... and she’s sitting right across from me.”

She looked up at him, her eyes displayed everything she felt in this moment — sheer happiness, fear, excitement, desire, and a loss of control.

Her face softened at the sight of his glorious smile.

“See, that. That right there. That smile is going to be the end of me.” She shrugged in defeat.

His smile began to fade as he stared at her, admiring everything about this woman, and how much richer his life became because of her.

“Padme.” He said — he now sounded serious, causing her to grow concerned.

“*Marry me.*” He asked again.

“We can’t.” She chuckled nervously now that he brought up marriage again. “Anakin, no one gets married after spending a few weeks together!” She reasoned — although her voice was all panicky.

“We’re not just anyone.” He assured

“We — we need witnesses for a wedding.” She threw out there, clinging onto any rationalization at this point.

Anakin looked around the ship. “3PO and R2 are right here.” He said with utter confidence.

Padme exhaled deeply before shrugging.

“I don’t have a dress.”

“3PO will get you one.” Anakin answered smugly.

“Okay... where would we even get married?!” She probed stubbornly

And a smirk slowly spread across Anakin’s face. “...Your favourite place in the whole world.”

Padme paused, glancing from Anakin, to the droids, and back ahead at the sky.

“Well...” She breathed out, as a bubbling sensation rushed over her. “I guess we’re getting married today.” Her lips curled into a smile

Anakin beamed back at her, his face displaying his pure joy. “We’re getting married today!” He cried out with a large grin.

Anakin and Padme got married at her favourite place — the Naboo lake retreat.

Just as planned, 3PO got her a dress, and he and R2 were their witnesses.

As wedding gifts, they gave each other their droids.

“We’re married!” Anakin jumped up once they were alone. And after long, tasty kisses, he began soaring through the house.

He rushed back over to pick Padme up, sweeping her off her feet, and twirling her around.

She gasped with glee, as he spun her around in circles. They both couldn’t contain their glorious grins as they gazed at each other.

“This is the best day ever!” He announced, holding his new wife tightly. “I’m so happy I could —”

He glanced from her to the balcony. And Padme knew that her wild groom was about to do something crazy.

“Wha— Anakin! Anakin don’t!” She warned once she realized what he was thinking.

Carrying her, he ran back out onto the balcony and stepped on the railing to jump off.

She wrapped her legs around his waist and held onto him tightly, screaming. Holding her, he finally jumped.

Using the force, he held them up in the air, inches above the water.

She relaxed once they began to float over the lake. Amazed by the view, and the adventure Anakin just took her on, she looked at her new husband with complete adoration.

“We’re flying!” She gasped, mesmerized by it all. She looked at her husband who was grinning like a cheshire cat. She couldn’t believe they actually did this, but he was right — their wedding was the best day ever.

He yelled out a “Yeah!” as they hovered in the air. She couldn’t help but smile at his manic energy — the energy that excited her as much as it terrified her.

Then, just as the lump in her throat finally disappeared, he abruptly dropped them in the water.

He swam below her, grabbed her waist, and began to carry her back up to the surface of the water.

Her legs wrapped around his waist once more, and she wrapped her arms around his neck.

Both giggling and giddy on their special day.

His hand brushed her wet hair back, away from her face.

“You look so good soaking wet.” He smirked, provocatively

Amused, she jokingly rolled her eyes, but couldn’t help but grin from ear to ear either.

She leaned in suggestively and softly kissed him.

With an intense desire, they continued to greedily steal wet, sloppy kisses.

“I love you so much.” He whispered, his voice muffled by his lips pressing against hers.

(Mature)

Once they were washed and dried off after their swim, Anakin stood there, in his black robe and pants, excited about his wedding night.

Padme walked into the living room, wearing a blue set. Her hair still wet from the shower, her skin glowing as she smiled up at him. He took a deep breath, absorbing her in. That beautiful woman standing before him was now his wife. He wanted to pinch himself to make sure it’s real.

“So... *wife*.” He grinned as he made his way towards her. Eagerly anticipating their night together. He opened his robe, and pulled down his pants. She looked down and gasped at how big and beautiful his manhood was, not quite understanding how she managed to take him in the first time they made love. But she was definitely wanting to do it again.

“What do you think about having a husband who’s in such good shape?” He smirked.

Padme beamed up at him before she began walking around the room. “Well, I was thinking...” She continued to stroll around. “About what I could do with you.” She finally stopped in the middle of the room and began to untie her wrap-around top, letting it fall slightly to the side — not enough to expose her, but just enough to show her skin down the middle of her cleavage — driving him wild.

“I’m listening...” Anakin let out a deep exhale, trying to contain his excitement.

“And... well, you could... come and kiss me *here*.” She sang in that heavenly voice of hers, as she let her top slide off her shoulders and fall to the floor.

He stood there, gawking at her topless body. Monitoring his breathing as he gazed at her supple breasts.

“And...” She sighed, “I suppose...” She now began to untie her trousers, and slid out of them seductively. “Here.”

As they fell to her ankles, exposing her completely naked body, Anakin swallowed a gulp after several heavy breaths. He wiped his lips with the back of his hand, careful not to drool at the sight of her.

“Would you be up for that?” She asked with an innocent smile.

“I will do whatever you want.” He assured, eagerly.

He then raced up to her with that infamous determined strut of his, and grabbed her. With such force and urgency, he cornered her to the wall, and grabbed her wrists, pinning her against the wall. His hips pressed into hers and he let out a grunt, before kissing her with a deep hunger.

With her back against the wall, she hummed out soft moans as he kissed her.

His forehead resting on hers, became so heavy as he engulfed himself in her kisses.

His open mouth remained pressed up against hers as he breathed in her moans. He finally let go of her hands and began making his way down her body.

His hands slid down her sides before resting on her hips as he trailed kisses down from her neck to her cleavage. He nibbled on her nipple, letting out a moan as he tasted it while it rested in his mouth.

Padme’s fingers ran through his hair as he lowered his head down to her naval. He closed his eyes as his nose became squished into her skin — kissing every inch of her belly within his reach.

She rested her head back against the wall, unable to cope with the anticipation as his tongue now drew a line from her one of her hips to the other. His hands slipped around the back of her thighs and he was finally face to face with her womanhood.

She could feel his breath on her down there. She bit her lip, trying to slow down her own breathing.

Anakin could see that she was visibly wet, causing him to let out a woozy groan, yearning to taste her. That groan of his was music to her ears.

His head collapsed onto her thigh as he took a moment to pace himself.

Finally, not wanting to waste a drop of her, his lips searched through their way back from her thigh to in between her legs. Only a couple inches away now, he flicked her clitoris with his tongue, making her gasp.

In this moment, she was thankful that he was holding her up, or she’d probably faint from how weak her knees felt. They had endured the teasing for long enough.

Her hands now gripped onto his hair as his mouth finally closed the gap. After finally getting a taste of her, he devoured her down there. She groaned with pleasure, feeling dizzy as he consumed her and sweat began to drip down her body.

She began to scream out his name as the pleasure intensified, which only egged him on. Greedily devouring her until she orgasmed.

The entire room had gone dark, she couldn’t see anything, she couldn’t think, she couldn’t speak — completely hypnotized by the control he had on her femininity with the swirls of his tongue. Her voice cracked as the heat of passion overpowered them both. Her moans grew weaker and desperate as the tingling sensation gripped her mind, body and soul.

“I love you so much.” She desperately moaned out.

Her words only fueled his desire more, as he furiously worshipped her with his mouth, unable to tear his lips away from her — her body, her moans, and the way she tasted was perfection.

There was no feeling like being locked in passion with one another. How could you love someone so much that it consumes you in every way? Every time they made love, it felt like they could breathe again.

Anakin finally let her go once she felt that sweet release. He looked up at her, hungry for more. His nose brushed up along her body as he raised himself up. He wiped his mouth on her breast before his hands slid around her back to grab her from behind. With one fell swoop, he picked her up and carried her to the bedroom.

*So we went on our way
Too in love to think straight
All alone or so it seemed
But there were strangers watching
And whispers turned to talking
And talking turned to screams, oh
But darling, we found wonderland
You and I got lost in it
And we pretended it could last forever
We found wonderland
You and I got lost in it
And life was never worse but never better*

Vader was reminded of how consumed he was by his love for Padme. Especially after remembering their wedding day and how it felt being able to be with her. More importantly, how it felt getting to be inside her — which is one of the few times he truly felt alive.

He then realized he was stood right where he saw Padme for the last time. The last time she was alive — the last time he ever saw her — on Mustafar.

He fell to his knees in that moment, crushed by his anguish. He placed his hand on the floor, where she had fallen after he force choked her.

Under his mask, he shed a tear.

I reached for you but you were gone

*I knew I had to go back home
You search the world for something else
To make you feel like what we had
And in the end, in wonderland
We both went mad*

Wonderland — Taylor Swift

8. Always With You

AN: TroySharpay: It's one of my fave songs too! I was waiting for the right chapter to attach it to :DD

Always With You

*You look at me and babe I wanna catch on fire
It's buried in my soul
You found the light in me that I couldn't find
So when I'm all choked up but I can't find the words
Every time we say goodbye baby it hurts
When the sun goes down, and the band won't play
I'll always remember us this way*

"I can't believe it has come to this." Padme shook her head.

"Hey..." Anakin soothed, heading towards her, visibly noticing her fear. "It's gonna be okay."

He held her close to him and she collapsed into his arms.

"We didn't even get a honeymoon." She sighed. His lips pressed against the top of her head and kissed it softly.

"Just promise me, you'll take care of yourself." She pleaded

"Don't worry about me. I'll be alright." He smiled sweetly at her. But she wasn't very comforted. This war came out of the blue, and her new husband was so brave but they were so young. She wanted to protect him.

"I'll do everything I can to end it on this end." She assured.

"Just take care of yourself." Anakin insisted, "I won't be able to focus if I'm worried about you."

She nodded, trying not to cry at their goodbye.

"Hey, no more tears, okay?" He said softly, "I'll be back before you know it."

He reached down and his lips lightly brushed against hers. “Oh, I’m gonna miss you.” His muffled whispers breathed into her mouth. He closed his eyes, trying to absorb her scent and her touch as much as he could before he had to leave.

His hands then slid down her backside and grabbed her, lifting her up.

Her legs wrapped around his waist, resting her head on his shoulder.

“I’m gonna miss you so much.” She whispered as he held her up.

Her arms wrapped around his neck, she lifted her head to face him, and forced a trail of kisses on his face before resting her forehead on his.

They remained with their noses pressed up against each other, not wanting to part. Their eyes were closed, breathing each other in for as long as they could. He planted one long, longing kiss on her lips before finally putting her back down on the floor.

As he headed to his ship, he glanced at her once more, and she waved goodbye before watching him fly off.

It took a few years but Vader finally managed to enter a portal in the hopes that he was successful in reaching out to Padme in the netherworld of the force. Sometimes he was good at blocking out their memories; other times he couldn’t let it go. This was one of those times — he had reached his limit and he needed her back.

He made his way through passing by several souls. They all looked familiar but he didn’t focus on them — determined to find Padme.

It was pitch black but he kept going until he entered a building. The building wasn’t recognizable until he noticed a shimmer of light far ahead. Once he made his way over there, he realized it was a balcony. The balcony looked so similar to the Naboo retreat, except it was smaller, darker, and the views outside were quite bleak.

Finally, he spotted *her*.

Padme turned around to face him. She was wearing a light blue gown — the same color of a blue lightsaber. Her beautiful, long, brown hair flowing down her back. Her glowing face beaming up at him.

“Padme.” He cried, walking towards her. “I found you!”

Once he made his way to her, he reached up to cup her face. Her hand reached up and placed itself over his hand. He sighed in relief, tearful as he gazed at her warm smile that radiated the terrace.

“Come home with me.” He pleaded, brushing her hair out of her face before wrapping his arms around her waist and pulling her close to him. “I need you to come back with me.”

“I would have loved you all my life.” She smiled at him.

Vader was confused as to what she meant. “Padme.” He urged, ‘We can be together again.’ He held her so tightly, wanting to immerse himself in her. “Just say you forgive me. And

come back.”

Padme reached up and placed her hands on either side of his helmet. “You... are not your worst moments.”

Vader looked down at her, letting out a breath. He realized she couldn’t hear him. They weren’t talking. She was just saying what he wanted to hear. She believed Anakin was still inside Vader.

He let go of her and began to step back, observing her.

He then bumped into something behind him.

Turning around, he was faced with another Padme.

This Padme was wearing a red gown — the color of a Sith lightsaber.

“Forgive you?” She scoffed.

Vader stared at her, trying to comprehend.

“How can she forgive you?” red Padme headed towards him fiercely. “You killed her.”

“No. No, that’s not true!” He growled

“You’re a heartless murderer.” she continued

“No.” He growled, tensing up. Knowing that this Padme saw that Vader was always inside Anakin.

“A cold... blooded... killer.” She drawled.

“No!” Vader roared. Seething with anger and trembling with fear, he reached out his hand. Without thinking, he began to force choke red Padme.

As he watched her fighting for her breath, he was reminded of what he did to Padme the last time he ever saw her alive. That shame encouraged him to let her go.

As red Padme began to cough, touching her neck. Vader stood there shaking.

He turned back to blue Padme. “She’s not coming back...” He realized as blue Padme pranced around by the balcony railing.

“It’s too late for you, *my love*.” red Padme huffed

Vader watched blue Padme as tears began to stream down his cheek under the mask. Red Padme was his fear and blue Padme was his desire.

Anakin’s words were right earlier: *the Padme he loved was gone, and whoever came back wouldn’t be the same. It wouldn’t be the real her.*

“This is the best day ever!” blue Padme squealed to herself.

Vader began to head up to her, wanting to say goodbye — wanting to get one last time to hold her.

“I’m so happy I could—” Padme looked over the balcony and began to step on the railing — mimicking Anakin on the happiest day of his life: their wedding day.

“Padme! No!” Vader yelled, trying to grab her.

Padme allowed herself to fall back, off of the balcony.

Vader rushed over, but he was too late. Panicking as he watched her fall down from the building until she disappeared in the darkness.

(Mature theme)

Vader floated in his bacta tank. He was done. He couldn’t deal with the pain anymore. He had failed so many times.

All he wanted to do now was end it all. The only other way he could be with her is if he left this life.

Vader tried to spit out his breathing device, planning to drown in the bacta tank.

But just as he succeeded to remove it, he felt something inside him stop him.

His one robotic hand was forced to replace the device back in his mouth. He could feel it with the force. He could feel what was inside him, forcing him to live.

He could feel *who* was forcing him to live.

He could sense Padme. He could sense their child. He couldn’t tell whether she was pregnant or whether he could just sense the baby with them — but he knew she had a child close to her heart.

“You have a purpose, my love.” She whispered

He could hear her voice softly talking to him, even though he couldn’t see her.

“It’s not your time to go.” She continued

In that moment, he realized he had succeeded in contacting her spirit — even if he couldn’t see it. But he wasn’t meant to possess it. He couldn’t possess it.

“I’ll find you one day.” Padme’s spirit sang to him. “Don’t doubt that, my love. Don’t doubt me.”

And finally he saw her face in the bacta tank with him. Like a ghost, the faded image of her body floated in front of him.

And finally she went inside him. He could feel it. He could feel her body entwined in his.

“You’re in me and I’m in you.” She said. He could hear her inside his head. *“I’m yours... forever.”*

He opened his eyes. He couldn’t feel her presence anymore but he knew that that was her.

She had come to reassure him of her love. She had come to save his life.

Anakin snuck into Padme’s apartment and found her fast asleep in bed.

He slowly crawled into bed behind her, and wrapped his arm around her. He breathed in as he buried his nose in the back of her head, smelling her hair.

Padme woke up, and turned to find him hugging her from behind.

She smiled as she turned around to face him. “You’re home!” Her face lit up.

“I’ve got a few hours.” He sighed sleepily.

Padme’s eyes quickly widened as she sat up, noticing a scar across his right eye.

“Anakin!” She cried as she reached up to stroke it.

“It’s fine.” He said, taking her hand and lowering it. “Go back to sleep. Just lay here with me.” He assured, pulling her back down to hug him.

Padme decided to let it go. She realized he probably saw many things in this war that left a mark. As his wife, she chose to just be there for him — and all he needed right now was to hold her in his arms.

She leaned over and kissed his scar while her thumb caressed his cheek. “I love you.” She whispered before laying back down.

“I love you too.” He breathed out. They shared a tender moment, gazing into each other’s eyes — and everything around them, the war, the struggles, the world, it all began to fade away, now that they were back together. They could breathe again.

He then wrapped his arm around her once more, squeezing her tightly, his knee squeezing in between her legs as he spooned her. She could feel how desperately he needed to feel her next to him.

She squeezed his hand that was wrapped around her. “Are you alright?” She sighed

“I’m better now.” He muttered, kissing the back of her neck. They both fell asleep.

Lovers in the night

Poets trying to write

We don’t know how to rhyme but damn we try

But all I really know

You’re where I wanna go

The part of me that’s you will never die

I don’t wanna be just another memory

When you look at me

And the whole world fades

I’ll always remember us this way

Lady Gaga — Always remember us this way

9. Sky

AN: TroySharpay: thank you so much for your support! xoxo

SandiaVida: Thank you so much. I'm glad you're liking it so far! xoxo

Sky Guy

*Look at me, it really was not easy
But I can breathe, and I'm so grateful
'Cause I can see I am free to do exactly what I please
So come with me to a place where we can be. . .
Follow me to a place where we can be absolutely free
To be exactly what we wanna be
Completely, lose control, that's when I need you more
Give me the key, to set your heart and spirit free. . .
I know what I want and I know that I need it right now
Gonna take you on a journey to a far away place now*

Anakin walked up to Padme and one of her handmaidens, Dorme who were standing in front of her ship. Doing his best to hide how happy he was to see her.

"General Skywalker." Padme smiled up at him. "I appreciate you accompanying me on this mission."

"Of course, senator." He grinned and shot a polite nod to Dorme. Remaining professional until she walked away, leaving the senator in his hands.

"Hey you." She bubbled, tugging at his robes.

"Hey baby." He leaned in a little too close, wanting to kiss her as he stared at her mouth. He let out deep exhale. "You have no idea what I had to do to get this mission."

With his face hovering over hers, he was about to reach up and touch her cheek but he managed to stop himself amid the tension.

"I don't care as long as you're here." She sighed, looking at his lips before finding the strength to take a step back. "How are you?"

"It's been crazy." He huffed. "The troops and I are exhausted, there's a lot of miscommunication within the Jedi. Oh and they assigned me a padawan." He groaned.

"Really? You?" She chuckled

"Oh don't get me started." He shook his head, "She's driving me nuts. This fast-talking, snippy little—"

"—Master Skywalker!" A familiar voice called, causing him to groan before he turned around to face her.

"Ahsoka uh—" He said awkwardly. "What are you doing here?"

"Master Kenobi said I should accompany you on your mission." She said once she caught up with them.

"Did he really." Anakin mumbled. "Well, actually I've got this covered."

"He said you'd say that. He also said you'll need my help." Ahsoka affirmed. Anakin glanced at Padme from the corner of his eye, who was equally as disappointed but better at hiding it.

Anakin forced an obvious fake smile, as his tone of voice became more stern. "Well, you can go back and tell him—"

"—It's fine." Padme quickly intervened. Nudging Anakin with a stern look before turning to Ahsoka. "We appreciate any help. Ahsoka is it?"

"Yes." Ahsoka replied smiling.

"Hi," Padme said warmly. "I'm—"

"—Senator Amidala. I know. Pleasure to meet you." Ahsoka held out her hand and Padme shook it.

"So, let's go!" Ahsoka hopped onto the ship.

Anakin then turned to Padme, "This was our chance to spend some time alone together."

Padme looked at him sympathetically. "I know. But if you keep going back and forth like a pair of bratty siblings, you're gonna completely blow our cover. So let this one go." She insisted. Before heading onto the ship she noticed his face fell. "Besides..." She began again. "She has to sleep some time." Padme smirked

Anakin, seemingly grumpy, changed the flight plan.

"Why'd you do that?" Ahsoka asked from the seat behind him.

"I'm in a hurry." He grumbled.

"You're speeding." Ahsoka noticed

“Don’t worry,” Padme assured. “Anakin’s a great pilot.”

“So I hear, Sky guy.” She chuckled at how many reckless travels they’ve been on so far before looking at the controls. “But you don’t wanna go that way.”

“Why not?” Anakin was noticeable annoyed.

“The separatist fleet has been spotted in this sector.” She explained

They begin to notice them, and before they could think, shots were fired.

Padme and Ahsoka start shooting back while Anakin flies them through it.

Until an explosion hit. Anakin rushed to protect Padme, calling for Ahsoka to take over. She quickly hopped in his seat to fly the ship.

Once they were out of the mess. Ahsoka glanced at Anakin and Padme in an embrace.

He hugged her tightly, whispering “Are you okay?”

She nodded. They then both turned to Ahsoka — who quickly looked away.

“Thanks.” Anakin said as he joined Ahsoka up front. Without her, the ship would’ve crashed.

Once settled into the accommodation Padme acquired, Ahsoka was standing before them, going on about her last battle.

“So I did this.” She acted out a kick as Padme and Anakin sat on the couch, watching her. ‘And then this.’ She imitated her lightsaber skills. “And he went down.” She stood there proudly, displaying her talents.

Anakin looked like he was staring into space, not amused. Padme did her best to show enthusiasm. “That’s... impressive! Some good strategy you’ve got there.”

“Thanks! Yeah, I’m trying. Not as reckless as my master... yet.” She teased.

“Ha ha. Very funny.” Anakin groaned, resting his head back on the couch.

“Ooh look!” Ahsoka ran off when she caught a stack of board games on the shelf.

Anakin then turned to Padme, annoyed and frustrated with what felt like babysitting.

“Let’s sneak off.” He whispered. ‘We’ll do it in the ship, I don’t care!’ He huffed, trying to lower his frustration. “I just... I want you.”

“I know...” Padme sighed, leaning her head back on the couch and looking into his eyes. “I’ve missed you, too. We just need to... hang in there.”

“Look! Let’s play. What do you guys say?” Ahsoka ran over with holochess.

“Oh great.” Anakin mumbled under his breath

“Sure!” Padme encouraged, and gave Anakin a warning look.

“No thanks.” He shook his head, making it obvious he had no desire to play with them before lying down on the couch.

Padme and Ahsoka began to play, while Anakin was almost falling asleep.

The noisier they got in the game, the more irritated he grew.

He finally got up abruptly and sleepily announced, “I’m going to bed.”

Once he left, Padme shrugged as Ahsoka watched him go.

“He’s in a mood.” Ahsoka groaned

“He’s just going through some stuff.” Padme sighed

“He’s like this on our missions too. Although he’d have lashed out by now.” Ahsoka relayed with a chuckle. “If he’s not in control, you can’t predict what he’ll do.”

Padme played her turn and then rested back on the couch. “Anakin has always had to trust his instincts... As a kid, he didn’t have any control over his own life. It’s made him weary of those who do have all the control. When he’s seen so many abuse it, it takes him time to trust... You just gotta be patient with him.”

Ahsoka stopped to face her, surprised by her words. “...You care about him a lot.”

Padme paused, thinking about him. “He’s been through a lot.”

Late in the night, Anakin snuck into Padme’s room and crawled into bed with her.

“Anakin.” She gasped. “What are you doing? We could get caught.” She whispered as he lied down beside her, wrapping his arm around her.

“She’s asleep.” He said, nuzzling into her neck.

“She could wake up, *Sky guy*.” Padme couldn’t help but chuckle at the expression on his face when she called him Ahsoka’s pet name for him.

“Shh don’t start.” He playfully warned. “And she’s not gonna come in here. *And* we didn’t fly halfway across the *sky* for this *guy* to miss a chance to ravish his very sexy wife.” He said in a raspy drawl as his lips hovered over hers, his eyes narrowing in on her lips as he finally stole a kiss.

It only took a few pecks to get Padme to allow him to deepen the kiss.

Finally, with a breathy huff, she managed to tear her lips away from his.

“She could hear...” She began

“You never were good at keeping quiet.” He teased, reaching for another kiss as he crawled on top of her.

“Anakin..” She turned away as she felt the warmth of his body on hers.

“I’ve waited a long time to get you alone all to myself.” He whispered as his lips followed hers, dying to touch. His sexy voice made it even harder to resist.

She succumbed to another delicious kiss.

“Mm mm.” She moaned for their lips to unlock. “Anakin we can’t.” She said with a heavy breath.

It was now his turn to let out a heavy exhale, releasing any pent-up frustrations.

“I’m sorry.” She consoled. “I really wanna be with you too. But it’s not worth getting caught right now. . . We should wait.”

“Fine.” He sighed, looking at her softly — his eyes studying her from her hair down to her lips, taking a mental picture of how beautiful she looked. “Guess we’ve got our whole lives to be together.”

Ahsoka peaked out from behind her bedroom door and noticed Anakin sneaking out of the senator’s room and back into his own.

She slowly backed inside, closing her door quietly. Lost in thought.

The next morning Ahsoka woke up to find Anakin already out in the living room.

“Slept well?” She said as she walked behind the kitchen counter.

“Eh.” He shrugged from the couch.

Ahsoka observed him before turning to serve herself breakfast. “...Senator Amidala is really nice.” She began

“Mhm.” Anakin seemed disinterested in the chit-chat.

“And... she’s very pretty.” Ahsoka continued. “You seem... close.” She finally turned to face him.

“She’s a friend.” Anakin remained nonchalant, slouched on the sofa.

“You know,” Ahsoka finally joined him in the living room. “You’re a lot calmer with her. Well, more than you usually are.”

“Part of my job is taking care of her.” Anakin didn’t look up, his eyes remained firmly on the coffee table.

“Hmm.” Ahsoka’s eyes now drifted to the coffee table as well, but her vision wasn’t really focused on anything. “Seems she likes taking care of you back.”

Once they landed back on Coruscant. Anakin grabbed the bags and headed out first.

As Padme was about to join him, Ahsoka stopped her.

"I'm sorry, Padme." She sighed. "I hope I wasn't intruding on this trip."

"What are you talking about?" Padme's soft gaze met her eyes. "We had a lot of fun. Besides, you practically saved our lives!" Padme chuckled.

Padme gave off a comforting, big sister vibe, and Ahsoka knew she had found a friend in her.

"You know... you and Anakin can bicker all you want, but you do make a good team." Padme grinned

Ahsoka turned to look at Anakin who was waiting for them. She then faced Padme once more and smiled.

"So do you." Ahsoka replied before walking off.

Padme paused, as she watched her walk away. She eventually smiled to herself. It was nice to relish in the moment of freedom that came with Ahsoka's understanding.

Even if it was just for a moment — they had someone's blessing.

Ooh I wanna touch the sky, I wanna fly so high

Ooh I want to hold you, I wanna love you tonight

Ooh I wanna touch the sky, I wanna fly so high

Ooh I wanna satisfy, I wanna make you cry

Like a bird in the sky, just you and I

We're gonna fly like a bird in the sky, just you and I

I wanna love you now, I wanna take you high

I wanna give you everything that you desire

Sonique — Sky

10. High Hopes

High Hopes

*Had to have high, high hopes for a living
Shooting for the stars when I couldn't make a killing
Didn't have a dime but I always had a vision
Always had high, high hopes
Had to have high, high hopes for a living
Didn't know how but I always had a feeling
I was gonna be that one in a million
Always had high, high hopes*

“Senator Amidala. To what do I owe the pleasure.” Palpatine greeted Padme as she walked into his office.

“Chancellor Palpatine.” She began once she stood before him. “I’m sorry for showing up like this. But this morning, our speeches to the senate contradicted each other. And I would like to negotiate regarding your future plans.”

“I’m always open to ideas.” He did his best to hide his grimace. “Please.” He gestured for her to take a seat.

Padme obliged and took a deep breath as she sat down. “I fear that if you choose to order more troops, we’ll be investing money and resources that we don’t have. We’re taking them away from systems. And people are already short of resources... struggling for food, shelter... struggling to survive. We need to put the people first.” She paused, trying to be as diplomatic as possible. “And I’m sorry but how do you expect to end a war, if you continue to fuel it with more clones.”

Palpatine pursed his lips. “I thought you’d be grateful for the clone army. They have safeguarded the republic.”

Padme huffed. She knew he’d take her criticism this way.

“I am. Truly.” She looked down at the floor. “But there are other ways to fight. We don’t need to resort to violence.”

Palpatine now leaned forward in his chair. “Senator, I’m sure you are aware of what’s going on in the front lines. You’ve seen the holonet. I’m sure you’ve seen General Skywalker,

and what he's doing to protect us. Do you want to leave him out there on his own? Without enough troops?" He noticed her tense up at the mention of Anakin's name. He knew where to strike a nerve. After all, he wasn't catapulting Anakin into the role of war hero on the holonet for no reason. He wanted Anakin to be the poster boy, and he wanted to make sure he alienated him from everyone else he cared about. "I can guarantee that the separatist droid army is only going to grow bigger and stronger. And we need to keep up."

After a beat, Padme tried again. "My concerns are for the warriors too. They are risking their lives for us. Surely you want to bring them home as soon as possible?"

"That is my number one priority, Senator." Palpatine said curtly. "All I care about is the safety of our troops."

Padme remained silent, and Palpatine could tell she was questioning his integrity.

"Look..." He began, adopting a calmer tone. "You and I have known each other for a long time, working side by side back in the day on Naboo. It was our home and we protected it together. But you wanted to rely on negotiation, remember? Where would that have gotten us now?" His snide remark didn't go unnoticed. "You see, Amidala... it didn't work then and it won't work now. We must continue to fight for our rights. *Fight* is the operative word."

Padme heard all she needed to hear. She let out a breath and stood up. "Thank you for time, Chancellor." He nodded in response.

She left the office, closing the door behind her. Standing there for a moment, fearing for the safety of her husband, fearing for the safety of her people. She wasn't as hopeful as she normally was. Something about the Chancellor's approach was unsettling — and all her hard work was not paying off.

Palpatine himself was lost in thought once she closed the door behind her. *She never trusted me*, he snickered to himself.

Padme Amidala had been a thorn in his side since his political career got any traction. And after many assassination attempts, he realized, that while he couldn't get rid of her entirely. He might be able to use her position to his advantage. And he wasn't referring to her position in the senate. He was referring to a much more personal role that she seemed to play. Her friendship with Anakin definitely caught the eye of the Chancellor, and after studying Anakin all these years, and her body language when his name was brought up, it gave the Chancellor all the confirmation he needed. There was something there that he could integrate into his plan.

Padme walked along the senate halls, surrounded by all the chatter. Everyone seemed concerned about the war. But one particular conversation made her stop her in tracks. Three people were sitting on one of the balconies in the senate, discussing the conference. Padme stood behind the wall, and couldn't help but eavesdrop.

"What do you think about the senate speeches today?" The first person began

"I understand where Senator Amidala is coming from." Replied the second voice. "I've seen what this war has done to many planets. Innocent people are dying. And she's right. We need to put them first."

"I agree that we must provide them with enough resources." The third spoke. "However, the Chancellor is right. If we don't invest in our troops, there will be no planets to save. It was his guidance that got us through everything so far. He seems to be the only one who understands that the best defense is a good offense."

"I'm with the Chancellor on this one too." The first person agreed. "He has proved that protecting the republic is his priority. If it wasn't for him, we wouldn't even have an army. And thankfully, he's put his faith in General Skywalker. That young man isn't deemed the hero with no fear for nothing."

"True. There's nothing he wouldn't do for the safety of the republic." The third voice noted

"More like *who* he'd do for our safety." The first person joked

"Oh you don't believe those types of rumors do you?" The third dismissed

"What rumors?" The second person chimed in.

"General Skywalker apparently had an affair with the Zygerrian queen. That's how he freed the slaves." The first person explained

"Well, I'm not surprised." The second chuckled. "He's a handsome fellow. I'd do whatever he asked too."

As Padme overheard their conversation, her heart felt heavy. She normally didn't bother with the rumor mill or anyone who engaged in it. But everything around her seemed so different now.

Anakin arrived at the Jedi temple. Hundreds of people came to see the war heroes arrive home. Padme stood behind one of the pillars, watching as everyone wanted a piece of her husband.

"General Skywalker!" echoed among the crowd as everyone had questions. Anakin did his best to answer them all.

He caught a glimpse of Padme as he answered one of the journalists. He gave the journalist a nod, as he tried to wriggle his way out from the crowd as quickly as possible to get to her.

But by the time he got through, she was gone.

He walked through the hall to catch up with her — finally finding her on her way to her ship.

“Hey!” He yelled once he saw no one was around. She turned around to find him behind her with a big grin across his face. “Where you going? Come say hello to me.” His wide open arms waiting to embrace her as he hurried over.

Finally, he had her in his arms.

His hands cupped her face as he planted a kiss on her lips. “Why’d you leave?”

“You were busy.” She breathed out, closing her eyes for a moment as she felt the warmth on her cheek from the palms of his hands. “Surrounded by all of them. . .I thought it’d be best if I just wait for you at home.”

“I’m coming with you.” He smiled sweetly, wrapping his arm around her protectively as they headed into her ship.

The journey home was rather quiet as she flew them. He was exhausted and apart from the *How are yous*, they didn’t say much. He closed his eyes, resting now that he was away from the war and the adulation that surrounded him when he arrived on Coruscant. He was with her, he could finally relax.

Anakin slumped himself on the couch while Padme brought him something to eat from the kitchen.

“You must be hungry.” She said as she placed a plate of food in front of him.

“Mmm.” He nodded as he took a bite. “So good! Where did you learn to cook like that?”

“My father.” Padme murmured as she sat beside him. “He loves cooking.”

“Remind me to thank him.” Anakin said with a mouthful. After gobbling up his food, he turned to face her.

“You okay?” He asked, observing her demeanor. “You seem kinda quiet?”

Padme shot him a faint smile. “It’s not important right now.”

Anakin leaned back on the couch to be closer to her, resting his arm up behind her.

“Hey, talk to me.” He said soothingly. “What’s wrong?”

His fingers gently played with her hair, and that comfort made her let her guard down.

“I don’t know what’s going on anymore.” She shrugged after a beat. ‘The senate is doing things I don’t understand.’ She looked down at the floor. “It’s like they’re supporting the very things we worked so hard to avoid. . .I’m starting to worry about what this war is capable of.”

Anakin stared at her concerned, he stroked the back of her head, encouraging her to elaborate.

“...Everyone seems to be changing.” She contemplated. “And I wonder... would it change you?” She finally looked up. Her sorrow-filled eyes gazing up at him made him feel weaker.

“What do you mean?” He asked softly.

“There were rumors... about you.” She looked down at his lips, averting his gaze. If she looked into his eyes, she wouldn’t be able to get the sentence out of her without tearing up. “That you had an affair with the Zygerrian queen.”

Anakin couldn’t help but blurt out a light chuckle. “That’s ridiculous!”

Padme exhaled, now studying him. “So... there’s no truth to it?”

Anakin tilted his head to one side, tenderly gazing at his wife with sheer confidence.

“She had captured slaves.” He began. “She took a liking to me so I had to get her to trust me to free them. . . I flirted a bit, but it was innocent. It meant nothing. I was just doing my duty.”

Padme paused, taking in his words.

“...We may be married in secret, Anakin. But that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t respect each other when we’re not around.”

Anakin sighed before giving her a nod.

“You’re right. I will. I promise.” While he knew she had nothing to worry about, he did his best to validate her feelings.

“...Nothing happened?” She eventually asked again.

“And nothing ever will.” He asserted, now fully turning his body to face her, stroking her arms. “Padme. . . I am madly in love with you. I’ll never *look* at another woman. I mean come on, if there’s one thing we don’t have to worry about it’s that, right?”

Padme finally let out a satisfying sigh. Feeling foolish that she gave the rumor a moment of her time. “I know. I knew that — I just... It’s just been getting to me. You’re so far away and everything here is a mess. My mind started to wander.”

“Come here.” He drawled, pulling her in for a hug. “Listen to me, you are my whole world. You’re all I want. I don’t have a choice, I have to be all yours.” He smirked.

Padme absorbed the heat that came from the embrace, resting her head on his shoulder as he began kissing her forehead.

“And you better be all mine.” He playfully warned, and she chuckled.

“Of course.” She looked up at him and her lips reached for his.

Anakin stood on the balcony in his black night robe and pants. He couldn’t sleep, so he decided to watch out for the sunrise.

Padme woke up to find his side of the bed empty. She got up to look for him and noticed him standing outside.

Walking over to him, she placed a hand on his back. “Come back to bed.” She softly spoke

He turned to her and pulled her in for a hug. “I will.”

“What’s wrong?” She asked, noticing the concerned look he had on his face. He always held onto her tightly when he needed comfort. She could tell there was a lot going on in his mind — a lot he wasn’t saying. He was under a lot of pressure but he always wanted to be strong for her.

With his arm wrapped around her, he turned back to face the night sky.

“To tell you the truth... I’ve been having some doubts about this war myself. And every time I try to bring it up... the council don’t seem to approve.” He let out a slow sigh before turning back towards her. His fingers stroked through her hair, getting entangled in her coils. “-I don’t know. . .As I said before. A lot of miscommunication.”

Padme closed her eyes, relishing in the touch of his hands in her hair. “I can’t imagine what you’ve had to go through out there. Sometimes I wonder how hopeful a person can remain.”

Anakin now rested his hand on the back of her neck — his thumb caressing behind her ear. “I’ve watched my friends die.” He said as he gazed at her neck, fixating on her was cathartic. “So I have to have hope, Padme. I have to believe it was not in vain. . . I have to *believe* I’m here for a reason, that I’m in the right place at the right time... that something good will come out of this.”

“I hope you’re right.” She breathed out

He then turned back to the sky. The sun was beginning to rise — and he smiled to himself.

“You know what?” He began. ‘When things do get hard, pray for that. That sunrise.’ He turned back to face her and grinned. “Because once I look out at the horizon, and I see the light... I know that it’s a new day.” He continued as his finger trailed along the side of her face. “And that means I’m one step closer to coming home to you. And that gets me through.”

Padme looked up at him and smiled. “You called this place home.”

His eyes darted from her hair to her eyes, and he shot her a half smirk. “*You* are home.”

Mama said, fulfill the prophecy

Be something greater, go make a legacy

Manifest destiny

Back in the days

We wanted everything, wanted everything

Mama said, burn your biographies

Rewrite your history, light up your wildest dreams

Museum victories, everyday

We wanted everything, wanted everything

*Stay up on that rise, stay up on that rise
and never come down*

High Hopes — Panic at the disco

11. Start A Fire

AN: SandiaVida: Thank you for your support! :))

Start A Fire (Make Me A Liar)

*I don't care, if you're here
Or if you're not alone
I don't care, it's been too long
It's kinda like we didn't happen
The way that your lips move
The way you whisper slow
I don't care, it's good as gone*

*You're watching, I feel it
I know I shouldn't stare
I picture your hands on me
I think I wanna let it happen*

*I said, I won't lose control, I don't want it
I said, I won't get too close but I can't stop it*

Anakin couldn't help but stare at Padme as she gave her speech at the senate.

Palpatine glowered as he glanced over and noticed Anakin's adoring gaze on the senator.

Once Padme was done, she headed through the senate halls until she heard a familiar voice.

"Nice speech."

She turned around and grinned as her husband stood before her. But before she could speak, Anakin grabbed her and pulled her into one of the cubicles.

Pressing her up against the wall, his body leaned onto hers, and she could feel his bulge digging into her.

Anakin was not about to waste any time on small talk. His arm immediately wrapped around her waist and forced his lips onto hers with fierce desire.

It didn't take long for the small cubicle to heat up. Their lips remained touching even when they parted to come up for air. His mouth refused to leave hers, as they continued to breathe into each other's mouths with every desperate kiss.

Heavy breaths from their noses clouded the air on their faces as they both moaned out in satisfaction at the taste of each other's kisses.

"Anakin." Padme's voice was muffled with his lips pressed up against hers. "Slow down." She whispered.

"It's been too long." Anakin replied in between kisses, unable to pry himself off of her for a second to talk. Anakin wasn't one to resist his impulses, and they couldn't possibly resist this passionate embrace.

As his mouth hungrily devoured hers. They began to feel a little hazy after numerous deliciously intense kisses. His groans matched with her moans, and suddenly they were forgetting where they were — everything but their bodies was a blur.

His hands began roaming her body, loving the feel of her silky dress that hugged her curves. As his fingers grazed the outside of her thigh, clawing into her skin, he gripped onto the material, making a fist as he began to pull up her skirt with urgency.

"Not now." She pleaded as she herself struggled to stay strong. She reached up and cradled his chin with her thumb and index finger, stopping him from leaning back in but he wasn't done tasting her. After she blocked their lips from touching, his lips immediately continued to possess her by trailing kisses down her neck. 'Everyone is in the building.' She moaned as the flicks of his hot tongue settled on her neck, making her legs wobble. "It's packed."

"I don't care." He said roughly, slowly brushing his lips across her shoulder, inhaling her scent with insatiable desire. "Every night I dream about you. Having you all to myself." That determined whispery growl made her shiver with excitement. His lips reached for hers again. His eyes staring at her like he was starving — starving for a taste of her, as though his life depended on it.

Just the feel of his hands on her set off a fire within. A fire that consumed all of her, making her yearn to surrender herself to him. And that fire would not be able to be controlled if her sensibilities didn't step in now.

She knew she had more self-control than her husband. And while his blind obsession was a huge turn on, if she didn't stop them now, he would have made love to her then and there. His burning, rageful passion wasn't one of his better habits, but when it came to making love, no one could do it quite like Anakin Skywalker.

She had to balance out his recklessness, despite it being an attractive quality of his. The truth was the red hot passion they shared was fueled by many things, making it almost impossible to contain. On one hand, he was a war hero, his life was always at risk, and they never knew when he might not return — this conjured up amorous thoughts, urging them to get lost in each other as often as they possibly could and as much as they possibly could. There was an element of danger as well with him being such a prominent figure of the Jedi — if they were caught, there would be dire consequences, yet it was one hell of a thrill sneaking around.

On the other hand, and perhaps what represented their love so well, was that they were forever honeymooners. Always greeting each other at the door. Never getting to stay together. Always waiting to immerse themselves in their fiery passion for one another. It was that devastating yet romantic nature of their relationship that ensured they'd never get enough of

each other. Never quite fulfilled. Never getting to experience what other married couples did: the joy of spending all their time together.

"I know. But that's why I have to care for both of us." She pleaded breathlessly. "I beg you, Anakin."

He finally stopped, resting his forehead on hers, catching his breath.

". . .Meet me in my office." She breathed out eventually, as his warmth from his scorching lips radiated on her face. "We'll make up for lost time."

He placed his hand on the wall beside her head, holding himself up. "Fine." He groaned before standing up straight.

He let out a heavy exhale as he stared into her eyes. His gaze lowered down to her full pink lips, and a half smirk spread across his face. "See you then, milady."

He softly, playfully pinched her chin before gesturing for her to leave.

She straightened her skirt and took a deep breath, gaining her composure before heading back out.

He then adjusted his bulge. And placed his hand on his chest, flattening his Jedi robes before following suit.

Anakin was about to head to Padme's office when his communicator went off. He groaned with a huff before making his way to Palpatine's office.

"You called?" Anakin asked

"Anakin!" Palpatine greeted him with a big warm smile. "Yes, have a seat, *son*." And Anakin couldn't refuse — Palpatine was always like a proud father to him.

"Is something wrong?" He asked

"Well, that's what I want to find out." Palpatine began as he headed back to sit behind his desk. "I saw you were present during senator Amidala's speech. And while it was met with a round of applause. I don't believe many will share her sentiments. And with her latest mission, I fear for her safety."

"What mission?" Anakin's eyes squinted, completely unaware.

"As you know, we recently heard of the senator who was poisoned." Palpatine lowered his head. "And now Amidala and Senator Organa wish to investigate the murder themselves."

"No, that's far too dangerous." Anakin shook his head

"I'm surprised she hasn't consulted with you. You've been her most loyal protector accompanying her on almost every mission of this nature... Perhaps, there's something she's not telling us."

"I'm sure it's a misunderstanding," Anakin assured. "Senator Amidala doesn't strike me as someone who'd deliberately omit information."

"I hope you're right," Palpatine sighed. "But if there's anything I've learned about politicians... they all have their secrets."

Palpatine knew that this little nugget of information was enough to start up a fire in Anakin. Anakin's need to be in control and know everything was going to pay off for Palpatine. If Anakin felt that someone he admired was keeping something from him, it would set him off.

"Finally!" Padme groaned as Anakin charged into her office.

"Where'd you think you're going?" Anakin blurted out

"What?" She asked, confused as he stormed up to her desk.

"The Chancellor told me about your mission, which is funny because I just checked and Bail already left back to Alderaan." Anakin folded his arms. "Something you wanna tell me?"

Padme let out an exasperated sigh. "It's not what you think." She began. "I wasn't keeping this from you on purpose—"

"—Right. Because you know I wouldn't let you go." He scorned.

Padme shook her head. "Will you let me talk?" She snapped.

Anakin continued to glare at her.

"I'm not going to investigate the murder, okay? So relax!" She huffed. "But... Bail is covering for me."

"Covering what exactly? What's going on?" Anakin eyed her suspiciously.

Padme bit her lip. "You can't tell anyone."

"Padme—" He began.

"—Anakin, please." She interjected. "As your wife, I'm asking you to keep this between us."

Anakin huffed in frustration. "Fine."

"I'm going to Mandalore."

"Padme!" He rubbed his forehead. "You know the Chancellor won't agree with you visiting a neutral planet—"

"—I need to do this, Anakin." She insisted. "I have to give peaceful negotiations a try."

Anakin shook his head. "You won't be able to go alone anyway. You don't have clearance. And I won't give it to you. It's too risky."

"Anakin..." She pleaded as she now headed towards him. 'I know how much you worry.' She reached up and cradled his face. "But you'll have my location. If anything goes wrong,

you know where to find me.”

Anakin tensed up, displaying his obvious disapproval before releasing a tight exhale. “Ahsoka will go with you.”

“Anakin, I’ll be fine—”

“—Look!” He interrupted. “I can’t go. I’m expected at the Jedi temple in an hour. So you either take Ahsoka for protection. Or I won’t let you go.”

“Fine. Ahsoka and I will have a blast.” She said determinedly.

But he wasn’t smiling back.

Her hands began to entwine in the ends of his hair. She smiled, noticing his hair had gotten a lot longer. He just kept getting more and more handsome.

“Are you done sulking now?” She teased.

“I’m not sulking.” Anakin grumbled as he clenched his jaw, averting her gaze. He refused to hug her back.

“Come on,” She chuckled, “Do you really want to waste precious time?” She lifted herself up on her tiptoes to reach her tall husband’s mouth.

As her lips brushed against his lightly, she could feel his body tense up. Knowing Anakin would barely be able to pull back from the brink, always giving into his desires. Although he thought he had gotten better with pacing himself — at least at war. Guess he still couldn’t do it with his wife.

Their kisses were as tormenting as they were satisfying, filled with pleasure that could easily overpower them both. They knew their hunger for each other would have them on the verge of destruction... which they’d happily surrender to for a moment together.

“Kiss me.” She said softly. His eyes now finally looked upon her. His piercing gaze heading from her eyes, down her body, and back up to her lips made her shudder.

Finally, his hand reached up and grabbed her hair bun, tugging on it to lift her head back. His lips found her neck — she almost groaned out then and there. His mouth had the ability to destroy her decorum.

His lips finally sucked on hers. His tongue slipped into her open mouth, taking what belonged to him. Her hands flailed about in a sense of abandon as his arms surrounded her. His hand reached up the side of her body, landing on her breast and squeezing it.

Their wet lips once again struggled to part as they salivated over each other. He charged forward, gripping onto her buttocks over her clothes, forcing her to walk backwards to her desk.

As he picked her up and placed her on the desk, he stood in between her legs. Once more, consumed by their love — their pure passion. Regardless of what was on the line.

But as they immersed themselves in fiery kisses, there was a knock on the door.

“Quick, hide!” She said as they broke apart. Anakin, trying to catch his breath, looked around before squeezing under her desk.

Padme wiped her mouth and straightened out her dress before shouting out, “Come in.”

“Oh Motee!” Padme sighed in relief.

“Your ship is ready.” She replied, “We’re ready when you are.”

“Okay.” Padme said breathlessly, trying to sound as calm as possible after the rush she had just experienced. “Let’s go.”

Padme checked her hair bun that Anakin had messed with, and made her way out.

Motee glanced around, checking she had got everything.

And from the corner of her eye, she spotted the top of Anakin’s hair.

“Caught her with the Jedi again.” Motee began once she and Padme’s friend and handmaiden Sabe were alone.

“They’re not subtle.” Sabe laughed

“I don’t trust him.” Motee scowled, and Sabe sighed.

“Look... part of protecting her means protecting her secrets too.” Sabe paused. “At least he cares about her — more than anything. . .And she deserves to be happy.”

*Oh, no, there you go, making me a liar
Got me begging you for more
Oh, no, there I go, startin’ up a fire, oh, no, no
Oh, no, there you go, you’re making me a liar, I kinda like it though
Oh, no, there I go, startin’ up a fire, oh, no, no*

12. Perfect

AN: SandiaVida: Thank you! XOXO

Perfect

*I found a love, for me
Darling, just dive right in and follow my lead
Well, I found a girl, beautiful and sweet
Well, I found a woman, stronger than anyone I know
She shares my dreams, I hope that someday I'll share her home
I found a lover, to carry more than just my secrets
To carry love, to carry children of our own*

Anakin walked along toward the Jedi temple. He breathed in the fresh air, hoping it would calm his frustrations. He hadn't been seeing eye to eye with them lately, and tensions were high all around — partly because of the war, partly because they didn't like his way of doing things.

He couldn't help but grow more resentful towards the Jedi Order. They take up copious amounts of his time, and he yearned for free will.

With each step he took, he practically groaned inside. Who knows what they wanted from him this time? He could only imagine what they said about him when he wasn't around.

"Much fear, I sense in Skywalker." said Yoda, deep in thought.

"Perhaps being the chosen one has gotten to his head. He's ruthless, arrogant, he tries to cut corners with the code, and his willingness to kill for a win is a big concern." Mace replied.

"He is a great warrior." Obi-Wan defended. "But he struggles . . . he cares so deeply about people, and he lets his emotions dictate his actions before reason."

Anakin seemed to be playing with a lot of temptations — the temptation to kill to succeed, to disobey the rules and follow his instincts, to give into his urges, to blindly and fiercely

chase his desires with tunnel vision — he seemed to dance in the dark, in the darkest depth of human emotions. If he sunk too deeply into his bad habits, he'd be one step away from willing to dance with the devil — if the devil could give him what he wanted.

Anakin knew his faults. In fact, he knew them better than anyone. It was hard for him to see the grey area. Everything to him was black and white — and he couldn't help but put his personal interests above all else. If those he cared about were in harm's way, then the person who commits this harm is the enemy to him. And he knew, that's not the Jedi way. But he couldn't help it — even if it meant killing in cold blood. He'd act now, question later.

He was trying, though, always trying to chase perfection. He was trying to practice patience, he was trying meditate and do what was requested of a Jedi. But unfortunately for him, the results were subpar — especially when there was a lot more on the line for him.

Achieving victory was not just for the republic but to keep those he loved safe. He would do anything to ensure the safety of his friends, Obi-Wan and Ahsoka, and his clone troops. But more importantly, ending this war was personal. It was to protect his wife, to be able to go home and be with her — his sole purpose for living is for her.

And what made it even more personal was that this was the very thing driving a wedge between them.

"You're late." Padme groaned on the holoprojector.

"About that... I don't think I can get out tonight." Anakin said sympathetically.

"You're not blowing me off again." Padme warned, shaking her head.

"Padme, I'm sorry." He huffed, impatiently "But what can I do? You know how important this is."

"I find it hard to believe you can't spare a second of your time for me. It's been weeks, Anakin!"

"Padme, don't make it harder. You of all people should understand. I'm under enough pressure as it is, and I don't need you making me feel guilty!" He barked "Duty comes first, especially in wartime."

*"I've done nothing but be understanding, Anakin. I don't think it's unreasonable to want to **sometimes** feel like I have a husband."*

Anakin lowered his head, taking a deep breath. He hated letting her down.

". . . I know, I know." He pleaded, brushing his hair back with his fingers. "Look — forget I said anything. I'll try to sneak away tonight."

"Don't do me any favours." Padme scowled, shutting off the connection.

"Still mad at me?" Anakin asked as he peaked through the door.

"I'm sorry, do I know you?" Padme mocked, folding her arms, and he couldn't help but chuckle.

"I brought dinner." He held out the peace offering.

"Good, 'cause I threw yours in the trash when you didn't show up." She got up and took the package from him.

*"Well, we don't have to eat. I'm not hungry anyway, **for that.**" He smirked but she wasn't amused. She placed the food down on the table.*

He sighed to himself, wanting to make her happy. She looked perfect in a beautiful, white, off-the-shoulder gown, looking like an angel. Sometimes he wondered how he got so lucky.

He grabbed her arm and turned her back around to face him.

"I'm sorry, baby." He eventually spoke. "I'm just... I'm tired, I haven't been sleeping... I don't mean to take it out on you."

"But you do, Anakin." She finally replied.

"I know." He nodded in sorrow. Why do we always hurt the ones we care about the most? He thought.

"And what's worse, you make me feel bad for asking anything of you. Our marriage has been on the back burner, and I've been more than patient because I don't want to put any extra pressure on you. But consider me. . . It's hard for me too!" She paused. 'My job is hard too. And all my friends, they have a partner to come home to. . . I barely have that. And when you do come home, I'm lucky if you'll stay the night.' She turned away from him. "So when you lash out at me, for telling you how I feel, yeah, it hurts."

Anakin hated seeing her upset. He pulled her back towards him, stroking her arms.

"I don't wanna hurt you. That's the last thing I wanna do." He lowered his forehead on hers, wanting to close the gap between them. "But I'll do better... Things will get better. I promise. Just have faith in me."

"I do..." She sighed, breathing him in. She just missed him, and now that he was holding her, all she wanted to do was sink into him.

"Forgive me?" He asked as he buried his hand in her hair — she melted at the touch of his hand.

"It's just..." She began, "When things get hard. . . I just want to hear your voice."

"Promise me, you'll always want to." He begged, gazing into her eyes.

She nodded, and he bent down and kissed her slowly, savoring her mouth.

"We've got tonight." He whispered as he trailed kisses on her forehead. "Dance with me."

He held out his hand for her to place hers in his. He twirled her around and they began to dance to no music — just to the rhythm of their hearts.

*We are still kids, but we're so in love
Fighting against all odds*

I will not give you up this time.

When I saw you in that dress, looking so beautiful

I don't deserve this

But darling, just kiss me slow

*Your heart is all I own
And in your eyes, you're holding mine.*

Anakin thought about how they danced earlier today, knowing it was moments like those that kept him going. It was her. The reason he rarely lost a battle, the reason he survived this long, it was all just to get to go home to her.

While that was great motivation, it also tormented him. Now he had her, he couldn't help but worry if she was ever taken away. She had already risked her life on missions he didn't permit her to go on. The Jedi would try to split them up if they knew they were married. There were many ways he feared losing her.

He was fearless to the outside world, but those who knew him best, knew fear was one of his most dominant emotions. He had these types of anxieties even as a child — they were just amplified by the turbulent details of his life.

Sometimes he wondered if being known as the chosen one, one of the most powerful Jedi, was actually more a curse than a blessing. He seemed perfect to those who couldn't dream of attaining his power or strength, and that perfection, while making him idolized, also made him a target. And he was always special — different. And people don't like different.

Maybe genius and crazy must go hand in hand, he thought as he walked up the steps of the Jedi temple.

After all, the problem with having a powerful mind, is that it's almost impossible to defeat when it turns on you. And lately, his mind turned on him a lot.

He had a dark side. A side that he had worked very hard to suppress. Sure, he had the same emotions everyone else had, anger, hate, fear, sadness, revenge, lust — but the difference is that while most people can catch themselves before they go too far, he often fully jumped off the ledge.

That dark side felt like an unpredictable monster. A monster that constantly desires to be fed. Taunting him, dancing inside him, coercing him. A monster that grows a little bit bigger each time he gives it what it wants.

He started noticing it was in him as a kid, whenever he was mistreated as a slave. The monster popped up again, urging him to defend himself, when he was trained to become a Jedi alongside younglings who made fun of him for being different. That experience alone made him want to walk away from the order. But Palpatine had convinced him to stay when he was a Padawan, train, and rise above their jealousy. And of course, he saw the full capabilities of the monster when he finally, wholeheartedly fed it — like with the Tusken Raiders.

There was only one person who made that monster fade away, and that was Padme.

Mature

Anakin groaned out in euphoria when he finally entered her. He lost and found himself when making love to her. He could feel her warm, wet, essence soak up his throbbing shaft inside her. He thrust into her, bearing his soul as he wrapped himself around her. Finally, he was with her, he was here in bed with her, and the whole world faded away.

Sometimes it felt as though he made love to her for survival, and the more dependent he got on her, the more fearful he got, worrying about whether someone or something could ever take this away. If he was certain about one thing, it was that if he didn't have her, he had no reason to live.

Feeding his anxieties only seared them into his memory, and once again his powerful mind began to play tricks on him. He knew what it was — it was the monster within him, burdening him with doubt, taking him out of the moment.

*He began to thrust harder into her, determined not to think about losing her. He was determined to focus on the fact that he was inside her right now. He was **safe** with her, and he will never let anyone pull him away. Their hot, sweaty, writhing bodies completely intertwined in the heat of passion. He could feel her soft skin as her legs wrapped around his waist, the warmth of her breasts that were squished under his chest, and her hot breath on his lips as he lost himself in the heavenly sounds of her sweet moans.*

He tried to stop the monster from sinking the idea of loss into his head, as it continued to torture him with his own fears. He shook his head defiantly as the monster echoed his innermost thoughts inside his head. He wanted it to shut up, to stop distracting him!

He looked down at her, trying to focus only on her, reminding himself that his fears are not real. She's here, she's safe with him. In a desperate attempt to get out of his own head, he wanted to completely immerse himself in her, he was never close enough. He began to aggressively penetrate her, fighting to silence his mind and really feel her insides wrapped around his manhood.

Padme noticed how rough he was being as he ravaged her, shoving his quivering member into her as hard as possible. She placed her hand on his heart. "Anakin," she moaned out in between heavy inhalations, "Calm down."

But he could barely hear her under the monster in his head.

Suddenly, his wrist communicator that was placed beside the bed went off, perhaps for the 7th time tonight. The clicking now added to his distractions. He let out a rough, heavy grunt as he pounded into her harder and faster — sick of everything that was interfering with his night alone with her — this night that he needed so badly.

As he felt this intense rage from the clicking, and the constant interruptions from the monster in his head, begin to overpower him, he mustered all his strength to plunge his way into the present.

Without thinking, he used the force to levitate them up off the bed, fiercely determined to fixate on her. He needed his fix. She was his peace, she gave him the strength to face the outside world.

In mid-air, pounding her like there's no tomorrow, he groaned as they were fully moving as one. She screamed out his name as they began to feel the vibrations of the pending explosion of their passion, which was even more enhanced for her as he floated her in the air. The sound of her voice singing his name was all he needed to rejoin the present moment — she brought him back to life. And he began to lower their bodies back onto the bed.

He became stunned by the orgasm that encompassed his body, and finally, after that intense buildup, he felt that sweet release.

Laying on top of her after a wild, passionate ride, his peaceful moment in her arms didn't last long. The clicking sound of his comlink went off again.

Letting out an angry, coarse groan, he crawled off of her and went to check it.

—10 clicks from Obi-Wan.

He threw the device on the bed as he huffed, going to get dressed.

“Let me guess, you're leaving.” She grumbled as she got out of bed and put on a robe.

He let out a tense exhale, annoyed that their night was interrupted, frustrated with the Jedi council taking their time away from each other, and angry that he was going to upset her again.

“Don't start.” He groaned. Noticing the sullen expression on her face, only made him more disappointed. ‘Look-you think I want to do this? Do you think I want to leave you? Like I wouldn't prefer to stay here in bed with you?!’ He growled, “I don't have a choice. **I have** to go!”

He was fed up with having to hurt her, seeing the sadness in her eyes.

“Everyone wants something from me.” He mumbled under his breath. He was buckling under pressure.

Finally, once he was dressed, he turned to look at her but she was quiet. Once again feeling like he'd snap if she dared to ask for anything — and she was tired of shutting up.

“Fine.” She huffed. “I understand.” She was so tired of saying it. And she didn't have to, he knew what she was feeling.

His face softened as he gazed at her. She looked so beautiful with her bed hair flowing down her shoulders, standing there in a light blue robe that so elegantly wrapped around her curves. She was perfect.

He walked up to her and cradled her face.

*“You come first” He soothed, stroking her cheeks. “Even when it doesn’t feel like it, just know, I survive out there because of **you**.”*

He pressed his lips against her cheek, absorbing the sweetness of her skin, before heading out.

Anakin headed into the lift at the Jedi temple, as he thought about their love making that took place just before he got here — picturing how beautiful she looked. He should have told her before he left, he thought. He should have told her how perfect she was. How her love saved him every time his mental instability almost pushed him over the edge.

He now finally stood before Obi-Wan, Yoda and Mace Windu.

“You wanted to see me?” He muttered with an air of nonchalance, as their concerned faces stared at him.

“Anakin, I’ve been signaling you all night! Where’ve you been?” Obi-Wan urged

Anakin let out an exasperated sigh as he scratched his head of hair, “I’m here now.”

He had no remorse anymore. He was tired of having to deny himself the things he yearned for deep inside. He hated having to leave Padme for this. They were always like two ships passing in the night — never quite getting their happy ending. And he resented the Jedi for keeping him away from her.

Even if he was on the verge of becoming the strongest, most feared man in the galaxy, it was the love of a good woman that made him human.

*Baby, I’m dancing in the dark
With you between my arms.*

I have faith in what I see

I see my future in your eyes

Now I know I have met an angel in person

And she looks perfect

13. Jealous Lover

AN: SandiaVida: Thank you for your support as always :))

DS2010: Yep, exactly :) Thank you for the review! xoxo

Jealous Lover

*I don't like the way he's looking at you
I'm starting to think you want him too
Am I crazy? Have I lost ya?
Even though I know you love me, can't help it*

*And I'm puffing my chest
I'm getting red in the face
You can call me obsessed
It's not your fault that they hover
I mean no disrespect
It's my right to be hellish
I still get jealous*

As the Jedi explained to Anakin that they needed to spy on a senator who could be conspiring with the separatists, he grew tense.

"You want Senator Amidala to spy on him?" He questioned, surprised at the notion. Shaking his head, he turned away, and started circling the room. "No, no it's far too dangerous for her."

"Her and Clovis entered the senate the same year." Mace explained. "They worked together side by side. Coming from her, it won't feel like an interrogation. Just two friendly colleagues."

Anakin huffed, struggling to hide his personal issue with this. "I don't think it's a good idea. There has to be someone else." He paused. "Besides, she already refused."

"Which is why, convince her, you must." Yoda insisted.

Anakin glanced at Obi-Wan, wishing his friend, mentor, his master, the man who was practically his older brother, could step in and say something. But he figured Obi-Wan is already going to give him a lecture about how he's handling the news.

Obi-Wan studied him, noticing Anakin's emotions were getting in the way. Obi-Wan knew something was up but clearly not enough to see just how personal this was for Anakin.

“Senator Amidala.” Anakin called out, rushing over to her in the senate halls.

“General Skywalker. Surprised that you have time for me.” She mocked

“Are you still mad about last night?” He lowered his voice.

“Why would I be?” She drawled

Anakin huffed. “Look, I need to talk to you.” He said before pulling her over onto one of the pods. “What can you tell me about Rush Clovis?”

“Ah, you’re here on Jedi Business.” She scoffed, shaking her head. “I already told Master Yoda that I want nothing to do with that. I’m not spying on a colleague and a friend.”

“Friend?” He cocked an eyebrow. “How well do you know this guy?”

“What does it matter?” She sighed

“I need to get a sense of who this guy is if I’m going to debrief whoever takes this on.”

“Oh,” She remarked. “I thought you were trying to talk me into becoming an agent for the Jedi.”

“That is not a job for you.” He said sternly

“Why not?” She folded her arms.

“Because if Clovis is involved in a separatist conspiracy, the last place you should be is anywhere near him.”

“Wait...” Padme contemplated that thought. “Rush is conspiring with the separatists?”

Anakin tensed up. “So you’re on a first-name basis.” He concluded through gritted teeth. But Padme wasn’t listening to him.

“I just... I can’t believe he’d do that.” She mused before finally turning back to face Anakin. “Someone has to get to the bottom of this.”

“Someone.” He nodded, “Just not you.” His firm tone made her perk up.

“Anakin.” Her eyes narrowed in on him.

“No, no.” He refused to let her finish, with a flail of his hand. “It’s too dangerous.”

“What are you saying? That I can’t handle it?” She glared

“I’m saying I’m not gonna let you do it. You’ve risked your life enough times this year.” He seethed

Padme’s eyes widened at his audacity. Now she was growing tense. “Oh so wait, you’re not *letting* me AND you’re questioning my competence?!”

Anakin let out an exasperated sigh, “It’s not that you’re not capable. . . But I couldn’t bear sending you out there.” He tried to soften his tone now but it was too late. She was mad.

“Well, I’m sorry but it’s ultimately my decision, not yours.” She snapped

Anakin caught her glare, and shot her a thin-lipped smile. “Lucky for us, you already refused.” He derided

“Actually, I changed my mind.” She defied. “I’ll do it. It’s vital to know what Clovis is up to.”

Anakin was surprised and annoyed at her defiance. “Even though I’m telling you not to?” He growled

Padme let out a slow sigh. “It’s just business, Anakin. You said yourself, duty comes first, especially in wartime.”

“Anakin, you seem troubled, my friend.” Palpatine spoke once a sullen Anakin walked into his office.

“Chancellor, I need to ask you for a favour.” He said once he made his way towards him.

“What is it?” Palpatine’s warm smile was comforting.

“I need to be assigned to the senate spy mission.” He paused, not really approving of his own behaviour. “I normally wouldn’t come to you for something like this. It’s just — I’m worried about senator Amidala.”

Palpatine nodded, making him feel like he didn’t have to explain himself. “Say no more.”

Padme stood on the landing platform, waiting for Clovis and the ship.

Finally the ship arrived, and the pilot who stepped out was none other than her husband.

Padme couldn’t help but chuckle to herself. “Wow, your schedule must have really cleared up.” She mocked once he made his way over to her.

“Can’t help it if I’m assigned to pilot the ship.” Anakin shrugged, nonchalantly.

“Hmm.” Padme shook her head with a light smirk. “How convenient.”

He gazed at her as she looked on — his eyes looking her up and down, until his gaze was interrupted by the arrival of Clovis.

“Padme! So good to see you!” He grinned, holding out his arms. He bent down to kiss her cheeks hello.

Anakin pursed his lip, curiously eyeing the senator, and he began to tense up as he observed his body language. This man hugged his wife for just a beat too long.

As Clovis gazed in awe at Padme, Anakin cleared his throat in a not so subtle way.

Padme, feeling completely uncomfortable the entire time, pulled away from Clovis, and gestured over to Anakin. “This is General Skywalker, he’ll be flying us.”

“Nice to meet you.” Clovis smiled at him before handing over his bag.

Anakin looked at the bag and then back at Clovis with disdain before turning on his heel, ignoring him as he headed onto the ship.

Clovis turned to Padme with an awkward sigh. “Friendly.” He said sarcastically.

Padme tried not to let out a chuckle. “Yeah.” She quipped, rolling her eyes. “Carry your own bags, Clovis.”

Clovis sat beside Padme, making eyes at her. Padme did her best to shoot him a warm smile even though she could feel Anakin burning a hole in the side of her head.

“So, how’ve you been doing?” She tried to keep things light.

“I’m doing better now.” He smiled. “I can’t get over how great you look. You’re even more beautiful than I remember!”

Anakin tried to focus on flying the ship but was growing more frustrated with this guy by the second. He breathed out, trying to not flip at the sight of this man hovering around his wife.

“It has been a while.” She hesitated, hoping Clovis would get the hint and keep things formal.

“Too long in fact.” He leaned in to be closer to her. *Guess he’s not getting it, she groaned to herself.*

Just then the handle bars of the seat lowered in an instant, hitting his hand. “Ow.” Clovis groaned in pain.

“Are you alright?” Padme asked as she inspected his hand. She then glanced at Anakin from the corner of her eye. Anakin shrugged in response.

But he had a smug look on his face. Padme’s stare lingered on him.

“Try that seat, it’s sturdier.” She pointed across from them, and Clovis moved over.

Padme knew Anakin had used the force to remove Clovis away from her. Once they arrived and got off the ship, she pulled her husband aside as Clovis walked ahead of them.

“Was that really necessary?” She whispered.

“What?” Anakin shrugged with nonchalance.

“I know it was you.” She warned

Anakin gazed down at her, staring at her lips. He let out a half smirk. “Can’t prove anything.”

“Anakin.” She said firmly.

“What?” He groaned. “It was a scratch!” *I wanted to do a lot worse*, he thought to himself.

Padme was not amused. Anakin was about to head back onto the ship but she pulled him back again.

“What is going on with you?” She kept her voice low and soft.

Anakin exhaled as his eyes fixated on the ground.

“...I don’t like leaving you here with him.” He finally breathed out. “I don’t trust him.”

Padme sighed and began to rub his arm.

“Well then trust *me*.” She pleaded, assuring him with her tone of voice.

Just then she noticed Clovis glance at them. “I have to go.” She huffed. “I’ll see you at home.”

Her warm eyes settled on his before she walked off.

Anakin stood there watching them go, trying to do as she asked and not let it get to him. So many things had been getting to him lately, and he had been growing impatient under the pressure — and he really didn’t need *this*.

Padme arrived on the landing platform of her apartment only to find Anakin sitting on the steps.

She chuckled to herself, shaking her head. She shouldn’t be surprised at this point.

“Again, suddenly, so much free time!” She teased.

“You’re late.” Anakin looked up at her.

“Well, now you know how that feels.” She sighed, deciding to sit down on the step with him.

“So what happened?” He asked, his elbows resting on his knees.

“Not much.” She breathed out. “Haven’t quite figured out what’s going on yet, but he does seem to trust me.”

Anakin clicked his tongue, annoyed by what she was implying. “So you’re gonna see him again?” He said in a low, dark tone. And she turned to face him.

“Anakin... it’s just a job.” She tried not to sound frustrated. “Trust me. Like I did with you and the Zygerrian queen.”

Anakin looked down at the floor. “...I don’t like him.”

Padme rolled her eyes at his sulking before taking his hand and squeezing it. “*You* are so jealous.” She announced in a light-hearted manner.

But Anakin was quiet. She could see it really bothered him. She knew he was working through his insecurities, trust issues and fears, but perhaps, spending very little time together lately made him even more anxious, since she was now going to be spending time with someone else.

“Hey,” She consoled, cradling his chin, forcing him to face her. “You have nothing to worry about.”

Anakin looked deeply into her eyes and eventually his face softened thanks to the touch of her hand.

His eyes fixated on her lips and he began leaning towards her, eventually stealing a soft kiss.

As their lips touched, a lingering kiss engulfed them. His face hovering so closely over hers, they smiled at each other.

“So you gonna spend the night?” She asked as her lips slowly brushed away from his.

His eyes darted from her mouth to her eyes.

“I can’t.” He groaned. “I have to sleep at the Jedi temple. They’re waking us up early tomorrow. And I’m probably already in trouble for being away now.”

She nodded — if she was disappointed, she let it go today.

Anakin continued to look upon her with admiration. His fingers traveled up her arm, brushing past her cheek before cradling her face. “I just — wanted to make sure you were home safe.”

She looked up at him with those glistening eyes and smiled sweetly. “I am.”

*And is it really my fault?
I get a shiver when I see you with those other guys*

Protective or possessive

Call it passive or aggressive

*I get jealous, but I’m too cool to admit it
When the fellas talk to my girl I ain’t with it*

*’Cause you’re too sexy, beautiful
And everybody wants a taste
That’s why
I still get jealous*

I can’t help but lose my temper and I don’t know why

Mashup of Jealous by Nick Jonas & Chromeo

14. On My Mind

AN: TroySharpay: Thank you! Always happy to hear from you xo

On My Mind

*With your feet in the air and your head on the ground
Your head will collapse
But there's nothing in it
And you'll ask yourself*

Where is my mind?

*Maybe I didn't treat you quite as good as I should
Maybe I didn't love you quite as often as I could*

But you were always on my mind

Anakin tossed and turned in his bed at the Jedi temple. It wasn't easy to fall asleep during the clone wars but it was even harder now that he hadn't seen or spoken to Padme in days — unable to get any time away to contact her.

Anakin walked along a pier leading to the water. The sky was dark but as he made his way closer to the edge, the stars brightened up the area. Once he reached the end of the pier, it became clear that this was no pier at all. Instead it was Padme's lake retreat balcony on Naboo.

He walked along towards the railing, noticing he wasn't alone. He turned to either side and spotted the faces of all the people he watched die or killed during the war. As he kept getting closer to the rail, he saw the people closest to him and they all had something to say.

Their voices echoed in his head, talking over each other.

Mace: You have disobeyed almost every order the council has given you.

Yoda: Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, hate leads to suffering.

Obi-Wan: Anakin, be mindful of your thoughts.

Anakin finally reached the railing and found a figure appear over the water.

“Mum!” He cried, running up to her.

“Ani? Oh you look so handsome, my son! My grown up son. I’m so proud of you, Ani. . Now I am complete. . I love—”

His mother began to drop into the water. He looked over the railing, trying to reach for her. “Come back.”

Just before his mother went underwater, she turned into Padme.

Anakin’s eyes widened as Padme’s body lowered into the water. She then spoke softly, “You can’t stop the change.” and disappeared underwater.

“Padme!” Anakin cried as he woke up in a sweat, heavily breathing. He sat up, waiting for his heartbeat to settle, trying not to engage with any thoughts or fears that the dream conjured up.

Dreams turn into nightmares.

Anakin heard the voice in his head and he knew the monster within him was awake.

You’re obsessed with escapism. With a life you will never have.

Anakin got up abruptly, silencing his mind. He rushed to get dressed and head out.

Anakin headed straight for Padme’s apartment. He needed to see her and know that everything was alright.

Once he arrived, he called out her name a few times but there was no answer. He began pacing around the apartment from room to room — but no sign of her.

As he circled her living room, he glanced at her desk. There, he spotted the necklace he gave her. He picked it up and let out a deep breath.

His thoughts were interrupted by the click of his communicator.

*Maybe I didn’t hold you
All those lonely, lonely times
And I guess I never told you
I am so happy that you’re mine*

*If I made you feel second best
I'm so sorry I was blind*

Where is my mind?

You were always on my mind

Anakin arrived at the Chancellor's office, where the Jedi already were. They all glanced at him as he entered the room — he was the last one to arrive as usual.

They began informing him of what was going on. He didn't know which was worse: the fact that Padme went off on another mission with Clovis or the fact that the man let her wind up in Jail.

"In Jail?" He repeated. "Where the hell is Clovis?"

"We don't know." The Chancellor replied. "But luckily, senator Amidala is to be released in our custody. You can be the one to go pick her up." Palpatine smiled at Anakin, knowing Anakin would appreciate the strings he pulled.

Once the Jedi left the room, Anakin stayed behind with Palpatine.

"Remind me to thank you." Anakin began.

"That won't be necessary." Palpatine assured. "Truthfully I agree with you. I can't believe the council would put the senator in this position — especially considering her history with Rush Clovis."

"What history?" Anakin crinkled his forehead

"Well, it's no secret that they were, at one time, close." Palpatine paused. "The Jedi should know better than anyone that personal relationships can cloud one's judgment . . . make them vulnerable."

Anakin tensed up and began to glare at the Chancellor. The roughness of his voice was palpable. "What did you say?!"

Anakin was fuming as he flew over to pick up Padme. Charging over to the prison guards who led him to her cell.

They slid open the heavy door and a tired Padme sat upright.

"Anakin!" She gasped. "I am so glad to see you."

Anakin stood there with his arms folded, glaring at her.

"You were in a relationship with him?" His tone was low. And when Anakin talked that calmly, it was never comforting.

Padme sighed, lowering her head. "It's not what you think."

"Oh no?" He was sounded colder by the minute.

"It wasn't like that." She shook her head slightly.

"What was it then?" He said harshly.

"He was interested. I . . . flirted with the idea once... -but nothing ever happened!"

"Did you sleep with him?" He clenched his jaw, not wanting to even utter those words.

"No." She assured. "It never got that far."

"So you kissed him." He concluded with a growl that cut through her.

Padme was quiet, trying to find her words. "It was long before anything ever happened between us!" She huffed

"Why didn't you tell me?" He hissed.

"Because, well, I knew you'd react like this. And I didn't want you to worry." Padme paused, lowering her head again. "I'm sorry. Next time, I'll—"

"Next time?" He growled, "What? The next time you go flying off with this guy? 'Cause you forgot to mention that too."

"Anakin, this mission is important for the republic."

"Why is it that whenever the subject of Clovis comes up, your excuse is you're doing this for the republic?" He scoffed

"I am, Anakin. This is strictly business." Padme huffed. Anakin glared at her before reaching into his pocket.

"Is that why you took this off?" He threw the necklace on the floor.

She looked down at it and proceeded to pick it up — a sympathetic look on her face as she looked back up at him.

"That's the closest thing you have to a wedding ring!" He snapped.

"Anakin—"

"—You know what, I should just leave you in here." He roared, interrupting her.

"Anakin..." She pleaded as he stepped outside and slammed the door.

Leaning back against the door, he took a moment to catch his breath. She rushed up to the other side of the door, banging on it for him to open it — which he ignored. She then leaned the back of her head on it. Looking down at the necklace in her hand, holding it in her fist before placing it back around her neck.

Once he attempted to calm his temper, he finally reopened it.

Now standing before her, Padme's hands cradled his face, her fingertips twisting his hair strands on either side of his face, trying to calm him down. "Anakin, listen to me."

He let out a shaky exhale.

"There is nothing going on between me and Clovis." She insisted. 'But I have to act interested, Anakin! And I can't do that wearing this.' She gestured to the necklace that she now had on. "I wear this to keep you with me. And I can't do this job with you on my mind."

"Come on, before I change my mind." He groaned, as he headed out of the jail cell.

*Little things that I should have said and done
I never took the time
Tell me that your sweet love hasn't died
Give me one more chance to keep you satisfied*

Where is my mind?

You are always on my mind

15. Smooth Criminal

AN:

TroySharpay: OH YAY! Love hearing how it made you feel! Thanks XOXO

Smooth Criminal

“Anakin.” Padme urged once they arrived home after a long and quiet flight back. “You have to get past this.”

She followed him into the kitchen.

“What?” He finally turned around to face her. “That you lied to me?”

Padme sighed in response.

“—That you’ve been flying halfway across the galaxy with this guy?” Anakin continued. “The same guy who left you to rot in jail?”

Her silence led Anakin to turn back to face the counter. She eventually grabbed his arm and pulled him back to face her.

“Look.” She began. “I know this is difficult for you. But Clovis and I have uncovered corruption in the banks. Believe it or not, I trust what he’s doing, and I need you to trust me.”

“He’s a criminal.” He spat.

“Anakin, he has proof that the separatists haven’t been paying interest on their loans.”

“I don’t care what he has.” Anakin growled. ‘I don’t trust him and neither should you!’ He huffed. Then with a flail of his arms, he yelled, “Where is he now? Huh? Where was he when you were arrested?”

Padme shook her head, “It’s not his fault.”

Anakin tensed up, “Why are you defending a guy like Clovis?!”

“Why are you so quick to condemn him?” She asked rhetorically. She knew. She knew just as well as he did that half the reason he had an issue with Clovis was because he had history with her. What she didn’t understand is why Anakin refused to give him a chance after she had repeatedly reassured him that his fear is in his head.

“What’s really bothering you, Anakin?” She asked softly. Anakin glanced at her before moving away, heading back into the living room. She followed him.

“Let me in.” She demanded, catching up to him. She now stood before him but he wouldn’t look at her.

“You don’t talk to me anymore.” She cried. “We used to talk about everything...”

Anakin finally caught her gaze. “Yeah, we did.” He nodded but then suddenly his eyes pierced through her. “Until I found out you were hiding secret flings.”

He brushed past her and left.

Obi-Wan rushed over to rescue Duchess Satine, who was held hostage by Tal Merrik. With both Satine and Obi-Wan at a crossroads, Anakin rescued them by killing Tal Merrik. It was in that moment that Obi-Wan truly understood why Qui-Gon saw the grey when everyone else saw the world in black and white. As Tal Merrik put it, the person to strike him down would be deemed a cold blooded killer. A Jedi’s goal is to defend life not take it — that’s what every padawan was taught. A lesson Anakin never truly had the patience to learn. And the council will be furious when they hear how once again Anakin behaved like a criminal. A great one, a smooth one, but a criminal nonetheless.

Yet Obi-Wan didn’t chastise Anakin for his behaviour. Instead, he was grateful that Anakin saved both him and Satine, and not just in the physical sense. This was one of those moments where he realized he had more Qui-Gon in him than he thought. Qui-Gon showed compassion to those who didn’t seem like they deserved it. He also understood that some attachments are impossible to break — and it wasn’t our passion for the people we cared about that was the problem, it was our lack of control of that passion.

Obi-Wan and Anakin were brothers. And Obi-Wan was more attached to him than he’d like to admit. And he showed him compassion like a brother, even though it meant that he’d be putting his brother (a personal interest) above the greater good (what’s right for the Jedi).

Anakin was considered a war hero for all the right reasons. He would do anything to protect his tribe. *Anything* being the operative word. His true downfall was his uncontrolled passion.

Ahsoka closely observed Anakin’s disregard for the rules, and how his actions often contradicted his teachings. Yet she herself understood where Anakin was coming from. Sometimes you have to trust your instincts. The only difference was Ahsoka had the ability to clear her mind when she followed her intuition — Anakin’s was often clouded by what he called the monster inside of him.

She knew something was wrong with her master but, like Padme, couldn’t get him to open up. Anakin would shove so many issues to the back of his mind, he was bound to snap one day.

“Won the battle, have you?” Yoda amused once Anakin came to visit him.

“Yes.” Anakin nodded. Yoda noticed he didn’t seem to be basking in all the praise.

“Troubling you, something is.” Yoda gestured for him to take a seat, and Anakin obliged.

Anakin looked down at the floor. “I’ve been struggling. . .with my temper.”

“I know.” Yoda almost chuckled as he stated the obvious.

“I’m trying to find peace.”

This seemed impossible for Anakin lately in this stressful environment. The war only worsened his mental stability. The marital issues were proof of it.

“I think I’m fine and then one minute I see red, and then everything turns black.” Anakin continued. “And I don’t remember what happened in between.”

“Your dark side, that is.” Yoda explained. “Fear it, you should not. Give into it, you must not.”

“How do I do that?” Anakin groaned, almost chuckling at how hopeless he felt.

“Passionate you are, young Skywalker.” Yoda nodded. “But if you let it lead you astray, fail you, it will.”

Anakin was about to leave the Jedi temple, when he found Padme waiting for him behind one of the pillars.

“Hi,” She breathed out once he made his way over to her.

“Hi.” He said quietly, and quite coldly. “What are you doing here?”

“I came to see if you’re okay.” She expressed, reaching out to touch his hand. “Are you?”

He looked down as she squeezed his hand before turning back to face her. The touch of her hand felt like what he needed all along to just breathe again.

After a beat, he shook his head. “I’m sorry for snapping at you.” He confessed. ‘I’m sorry for leaving like that.’ He lowered his head in shame. “...I don’t know what’s going on with me.”

Padme’s sorrowful eyes looked up at him. “Let me help you.” She empathized.

They were interrupted by Captain Rex calling Anakin over.

“I’ll be right there.” He shouted back before turning back to face her.

“I . . .” Anakin paused, letting out an exasperated sigh as he gazed longingly into her eyes. “I love you.”

With one hand on the small of her back and the other reaching up to cup her face, he pulled her in for a quick yet yearning kiss. His thumb then brushed along her lips. They didn’t need to say anything; this silent, tender moment expressed all the love, fear, worry and uncertainty they both felt. He then reached to cup the nape of her neck, his fingers slipping under the hair strands that were tightly slicked back to hold up her buns. Getting one last look at her, he

breathed out and she could feel his warm breath on her face. He then turned away and headed to Rex.

Ani, are you okay?

Will you tell us that you're okay?

16. Crescendo

AN: DS2010: Yep :))

Crescendo (Monster)

*The secret side of me, I never let you see
I keep it caged but I can't control it
So stay away from me, the beast is ugly
I feel the rage and I just can't hold it*

*My secret side I keep hid under lock and key
I keep it caged but I can't control it
'Cause if I let him out he'll tear me up, break me down*

Anakin was struggling with the last nightmare he had. It embodied all his fears. The PTSD he had from the war, the pressure that was put on him by the Jedi council, and lastly, and most significantly, the fear of instability which mostly resulted from the fear of losing the ones he loved.

The one thing he desired most was stability — to have a safe, grounded environment that helped calm his neuroticism. This was the main reason why that nightmare triggered him so. It showed the death of his mother, the first person that ever stabilized him and helped make his fears fade away. When he lost her, he craved that same attachment, mourning the separation.

Padme then became that anchor, and the fact that she took the place of his mother in the dream made him realize his nightmare was trying to tell him something. It was representing the fear of loss he felt — especially since he felt that she was being pulled away from him since Clovis appeared.

All Anakin has ever longed for was a family, something that represents stability, home, security and peace. Like his mother before her, Padme became the most important thing in his life — she was his family, and he couldn't lose her too.

This fear that she was being pulled away from him only increased once Anakin stood in the Chancellor's office, seeing the return of Clovis.

The tension was palpable. Yoda standing beside Anakin could feel his rage as Clovis attempted to explain himself to the Chancellor.

Anakin did his best to bite his tongue albeit failing to add in a diss here and there. Luckily for him, Bail Organa was the first to speak up and point out Clovis' hypocrisy. But even that went downhill when his own wife came to Clovis' defense.

Anakin glanced at her with a sharp glare in his eye, making Yoda once again grow suspicious. Yoda knew Anakin felt an affection for the senator but he didn't expect him to want to control her actions.

As Padme rushed to the Chancellor's desk to vouch for Clovis' findings once the Chancellor requested proof, Anakin's fear crept back in.

Hearing the Chancellor soften his stance towards the senator and encourage Padme to work with him had Anakin's blood boiling.

As the crowd began to disperse, Anakin grabbed Padme's arm and pulled her to the side.

"Why didn't you just say no?!" He groaned

"Say no?" Padme looked up at him in bewilderment. "Anakin, this is my mission. I deserve to see it through. . . Plus the chancellor asked me."

"This has nothing to do with you now." Anakin hissed. "Clovis can handle it on his own. You don't need to be there."

"Anakin, this has *everything* to do with me." Padme cried.

Anakin let out a frustrated exhale. "I don't want you working with Clovis!"

Padme shook her head.

"This again?" Padme wanted to pull her hair out with how frustrating he was. "Anakin... I can't keep having the same fight over and over again!" She snapped back breathlessly.

"Then turn this one down." He roared, turning away from her. "As your husband I *demand* that you walk back in there and tell the Chancellor that you are stepping down!"

Padme was shocked. She couldn't wrap her head around his behaviour. Pausing for a moment to gather her thoughts.

"No." She finally replied, quietly. Her voice was barely audible as she stood there. Her wide eyes staring up at him. She began to take a step back, shaking her head slightly. "I won't do that."

Anakin tensed up as she walked away, defying him.

"If you go off with that guy." He clenched his jaw. "Padme, I swear if you walk out that door—"

"—Then what, Anakin?" She urged with a firm whisper. Taking a moment to ensure she kept her voice low. "I am your *wife*! I have done nothing to make you doubt me. This issue is yours and yours alone. . . and if you can't *trust* me—"

“—Excuse me,” They both turned around once they heard Clovis appear. “Sorry to interrupt but uh, Padme, shouldn’t we get going?”

Anakin’s eyes remained firmly on the ground as Padme did her best to act professional. “Yes, I’ll be right there.” She shot him a faint smile before turning back to Anakin.

Anakin glanced up at her, feeling hopeless. Her soft eyes still warm as they settled on him, wishing he would meet her halfway. She began to head backwards, finally turning away from him and following Clovis.

Anakin remained tight-lipped, and underneath the anger displayed in his eyes, there was only fear.

*It’s hiding in the dark, its teeth are razor sharp
There’s no escape for me, it wants my soul, it wants my heart
No one can hear me scream, maybe it’s just a dream
Maybe it’s inside of me, stop this monster*

Anakin headed back to his room at the Jedi temple and began fixing repairs. He was always good at fixing things. He believed he could fix anything — it gave him a sense of control.

“I’ve been looking for you.” Obi-Wan announced as he walked in.

“Something wrong?” Anakin murmured, not looking up.

“You tell me.” Obi-Wan observed him. “Master Yoda believes your judgments concerning Rush Clovis are clouded.”

Anakin scoffed in response.

“It seems just saying his name is enough to rile you up.” Obi-Wan could sense Anakin’s rage.

“...I don’t trust him.” Anakin grumbled

“Yes, I’m aware.” Obi-Wan nodded with a smirk.

Anakin searched for one of his screws on the desk and Obi-Wan took a seat.

“Anakin.” He said firmly, trying to get his attention. “I would be remiss if I didn’t assume part of your distrust is due to his affiliation with senator Amidala.”

Anakin stopped what he was doing and exhaled — still refusing to look at Obi-Wan.

“Anakin...” Obi-Wan urged.

Anakin huffed as he plopped himself on the bed.

“They had a relationship!” He snapped before catching himself. “-I... I simply fear that she’s vulnerable to her emotions.”

“She is? Or you are?” Obi-Wan questioned and Anakin went silent again.

Obi-Wan paused, wanting to word it right. “I’m not blind, Anakin. I know you care about senator Amidala a lot. You always have. . .It’s not that you’re not allowed to have these feelings, it’s natural.” He spoke softly. “...You’ve met Satine. You know I once harboured feelings for her.” He sighed. “But we can’t allow ourselves to overstep certain boundaries.”

“Senator Amidala and I are simply friends.” Anakin growled, finally facing him.

Obi-Wan looked him right in the eye. “And friends you must remain.”

“Believe me, I’m well aware of my responsibilities.” He retorted, resentfully.

*It’s scratching on the walls, in the closet, in the halls
It comes awake and I can’t control it
Hiding under the bed, in my body, in my head
Why won’t somebody come and save me from this, make it end?*

Padme arrived home from her meeting with Clovis. She was still annoyed at Anakin. She knew she was right. She knew she was doing the right thing. But a part of her hated that she left on bad terms.

She decided to try and turn things around. Perhaps a nice romantic dinner would smooth things over. She put in the effort to make a home-cooked meal, got dressed up, and left him a message, hoping that a calm couple’s night would ease his mind.

She lit up the fireplace just as she heard a knock on the door.

“Clovis?!” The surprised look on her face didn’t go unnoticed.

“Bad time?” He joked, glancing around the living room. “I’m not interrupting anything, am I?”

“Uh.” She glanced from the coffee table back to him. ‘No, no.’ She rubbed her forehead, “I uh... was supposed to have friends over but — plans got canceled.” Her voice trailed off. She was stuck in her head.

“Well, their loss is my gain.” He smiled at her, letting himself in.

She slowly followed him to the couch, a little absent-minded.

“I thought we could get a head start. Why wait ’til tomorrow?” He grinned and she hesitantly nodded.

“I don’t know.” Clovis rubbed his eyes, not able to look at the computer screen anymore. “Let’s call it a night. I think that’s enough business for one evening.”

“Yeah...” Padme sighed, closing the laptop.

Clovis helped himself to the platter of appetizers on the table. Padme glanced at him from the corner of her eye, realizing he had no plans of leaving.

“Do you have somewhere to be?” She asked

“Nope.” He grinned at her. “Even if I did, I’d rather be here.”

“Clovis—” She began, thinking maybe she should just come out and tell him she’s not interested but he interrupted her.

“This feels like old times, doesn’t it?” He leaned over. “The late dinners after work. The celebrations... The good old days.”

Padme was uncomfortable with him hovering over her.

He shuffled over to her, closing the gap between them on the couch. Raising his arm to rest around her shoulders, he leaned in for a kiss.

“Clovis.” She urged, holding her hand up to stop him. “Those good old days... they weren’t so good.”

Clovis paused, leaning back up. “I don’t understand.” He crinkled his forehead, “I thought you liked me. You’ve stood by my side through all of this. Wanting to work with me, to spend more time together.”

Padme sighed, turning to face him. “I believed in your work, Rush. But I don’t— I don’t feel that way about you.”

“It’s that Jedi, isn’t it?” He leaned back on the couch.

“General Skywalker?” She asked nonchalantly. “No. We’re just friends.”

“Really?” His eyes narrowed in on her. “Because it seemed... it seemed like what I walked into earlier was a sort of lovers’ quarrel.”

Padme shook her head, “He’s... he’s just protective of me. He’s been my loyal bodyguard for over 2 years.”

“Well, if that’s all there is to it.” He got up and pulled her up with him.

“Clovis.” She shook her head, trying to leave but he pulled her back to dance with him.

“I’ve never really gotten over you, Padme.” Clovis began, staring down at her. She turned away, wanting to squirm away. “I promised myself if I ever got another chance, I wouldn’t let you go again.”

“Clovis, I’m sorry. But I’m not where you are.”

“Maybe this will change your mind.” With his hand on the small of her back, he leaned over her, eager for a kiss.

“Clovis, no!” She warned.

As Clovis tried to force his lips onto hers in the middle of the living room, now standing in the doorway, was Anakin.

And Anakin finally snapped.

“Get away from her!” They both turned as they heard Anakin growl as he saw red. Without a minute to waste, Anakin charged in, in a burst of rage, reaching his arm up to force choke the senator.

Watching Clovis fight for his breath, Padme’s eyes widened in shock.

“Anakin! No!” she finally yelled. But Anakin wasn’t paying any attention, consumed by his anger.

Letting Clovis drop to the floor, he then ignited his lightsaber. He could hear Padme’s voice in the distance yelling at him to stop but he had tunnel vision.

Clovis tried to catch his breath, urging Anakin to fight like a man without his Jedi tricks. And Padme placed her hands over her head.

If there was one person you don’t challenge, it’s the war general, highly trained in combat, rage-filled, mentally unstable, most powerful force user with a metal hand. This was not the person whose wife you hit on.

In fact, with the many admirers Padme had, it was a wonder Anakin hadn’t murdered someone.

Padme was in a fright, having no idea what to expect. She hadn’t seen Anakin this angry since the Tusken Raiders tortured and murdered his mother. But this... there was no justifying this.

Watching the men in a fist fight, she kept screaming at them both to stop.

She then saw the darkness in her husband’s eyes as he finally looked at her.

“You don’t get a say in this.” He roared.

“i thought you said he didn’t have feelings for you!” Clovis shot at her, shocked and fearful of the black fist that came crashing down at him. Noticing Anakin take a moment to glare at Padme, gave him a chance to hit him where it hurts.

“Perhaps you should accept that the senator has other interests than you.” Clovis spat. But much to his dismay, further angering the Jedi Knight was not in his best interest.

Clovis got a few decent punches in there, until Anakin wiped the floor with him.

Anakin’s violent rampage resulted in a defeated Clovis, helplessly lying on the floor. Anakin mindlessly punching him again and again.

“Anakin! what are you doing?!” Padme cried nervously, “You’re killing him!”

Finally the blackout faded — as though her voice turned on a light.

Anakin caught himself, fist in the air, heavily breathing as he came out of an entirely rampant episode. He scared himself with how detached he could be from his own body.

Anakin got up and stood there over Clovis’ body, looking from him to his own hand.

Once the medical assistants left with an unconscious Clovis, Padme turned to Anakin, fearful and livid.

“What is the matter with you?!” She hissed, unable to comprehend what just happened. “You almost killed him!”

“The world would’ve been better off.” He mumbled, and her eyes widened as she glared him.

“Have you lost your mind?!” She cried

“Me?” He drawled in that hauntingly quiet tone. ‘I come home to find *my* wife all dolled up, fireplace going, feeding that serpent *my* food.’ He said through gritted teeth, and his voice began to raise. “And get a front row seat to him drooling all over you?!” With a flail of his hand, he used the force to grab the table cloth and pull it off, smashing all the plates on the floor.

The rage in his voice echoed so loudly in the room, it shot straight through her.

In a panic, she glanced from the now broken plates back to him.

“I did that for you.” She said quietly, still in shock. “He showed up—”

“Oh don’t give me that.” He snapped. “I’ve warned you for weeks he couldn’t be trusted. You chose to work with him anyway!”

Padme stood there, feeling paralyzed, wondering what the hell just happened. “...What are we even doing?” She eventually moaned, her hands shaking. “I can’t do this anymore.” She paused, looking down at the floor. “This is not a marriage, Anakin, if you don’t trust me.”

Anakin let out a fierce exhale, trying to slowly gain control of his maniacal breathing.

Padme finally looked him in the eye. “So... do you trust me?”

Anakin took a moment, trying to soothe the monster in his head. He finally breathed out. “No.”

Padme swallowed a gulp, trying not to let any tears fall. She was about to walk off before turning to look at him one last time, pointing at the mess he made by the coffee table. “Before you leave, clean that up.”

She stormed off into her bedroom and slammed the door shut.

Anakin’s eyes darted from her bedroom door to the table, letting out another tense sigh as he clenched his fist, and stormed over to his ship.

*I feel it deep within, it's just beneath the skin
I must confess that I feel like a monster
I hate what I've become, the nightmare's just begun
I must confess I feel like a monster*

I, I feel like a monster

17. Animal I've Become

AN: DS2010: I know :(It's hard to write that stuff

Animal I've Become

*I can't escape this hell, so many times I've tried
But I'm still caged inside
Somebody get me through this nightmare
I can't control myself
So what if you can see, the darkest side of me?
No one will ever change this animal I have become
Help me believe, it's not the real me
Somebody help me tame this animal I have become*

Anakin stood at the end of the senate hall, waiting for Padme to arrive, hoping to talk to her.

As she began making her way to the pods, he rushed over.

"Padme!" He pleaded, making sure his voice was low enough not to be overhead.

Padme glanced up at him and continued walking, letting out a sigh.

"Padme, can we talk?" He urged, following her.

"Not now, Anakin." She whispered firmly, and he huffed in response.

"I'm sorry about last night." He blurted out, "...Something inside me just snapped."

"—Anakin!" She interjected, "*Not* now."

She glanced at Clovis who was waiting for her by the pod and back at Anakin. "We'll talk at home." She said under her breath.

She walked over to Clovis. Anakin watched them converse with a heavy heart.

As Padme and Clovis informed the senate of what was really going on within the banks, Anakin leaned against the wall on one of the balconies, looking down at them — feeling lost, defeated and sorrowful.

Palpatine noticed the sullen expression on Anakin's face and patted him on the back.

"This will all be resolved soon." He assured.

"Chancellor." Anakin turned to face him after a beat, "I have to say, I don't feel good about this. I don't trust Clovis as far as I can throw him."

"Which I'm sure is far." Palpatine joked but Anakin wasn't laughing.

"Anakin," Palpatine began again, "I can assure you, I won't miss a beat. If your suspicions are right, we will sort it all out in time."

"You don't have to deal with this." Clovis spoke once he and Padme sat in her office.

"Clovis, please." She groaned, trying to work.

"I kept my mouth shut for you." He now stood up and headed towards her. "But that man should be behind bars."

"Clovis." Padme paused, trying to control her frustrations "Look, I appreciate your discretion—"

"—This is not about me, Padme. . .I'm worried about you. That man shouldn't be anywhere near you. He's dangerous."

Padme ignored him, and Clovis let out an exasperated sigh.

"You should report him." Clovis insisted, "Go to the Chancellor. Or better yet, go to the Jedi council and let them deal with him."

"Clovis!" Padme now stood up out of her chair. 'I said let it go.' She said firmly. "... I think you should leave."

Clovis looked back at her surprised, but eventually obliged.

"One more thing." She spoke as he headed to the door, causing him to turn back around to face her. "If you mention so much as a word about what happened with Anakin, I'll stand before the senate and inform them all of how you tried to sexually harass me in my own home."

A speechless Clovis took a moment to gather himself before walking out.

"General Skywalker." Captain Rex caught up with Anakin who was about to board his ship.

"Not now, Rex, I've got somewhere to go."

"Are you alright, sir?" Rex asked, noticing Anakin completely absent minded today.

“Yeah, why?” Anakin replied defensively.

“I saw you, sir.” Rex sighed, “I saw you the other day, at the Jedi temple, kissing the senator.”

Anakin lowered his head. He couldn’t deal with this now. He had enough on his mind. He exhaled, glancing at Rex for a moment before heading onto his ship.

Padme arrived home to find Anakin sitting on her couch. She walked over, now standing in front of him with her arms folded.

“Yes?” She asked

A tear streamed down Anakin’s cheek.

“I’m sorry, Padme.” He pleaded. “I know what I did was wrong. But I couldn’t stop it. I was too far gone.”

Padme looked at the floor, contemplating it all.

“I had no intention of killing the guy!” Anakin assured, letting out a heavy exhale, “I just — I saw him there with his hands on you, and I snapped.”

Padme finally joined him on the couch.

“Anakin,” She finally breathed out. ‘I am sorry if the way I handled things with Clovis wasn’t what you wanted but... I told you time and time again that I don’t have feelings for the guy. You just refused to accept it.’ She huffed. “The truth is, you could’ve pulled yourself out of this before you went that far. You chose to believe the worst in me and it brought out the worst in you.”

Anakin nodded — his teary eyes staring at the floor. “I just... lost control. I was angry, hurt.”

“*You* are the only one who hurt you.” Padme informed. “You have got to realize that you must control your thoughts. Your thoughts shouldn’t control you.”

“I wanna take it back. . .I’ll do better!” He insisted.

“I don’t know,” Padme sighed. “Maybe you should just focus on yourself for a while.”

Anakin looked up at her fearfully, eagerly studying her eyes. He couldn’t bear hearing her say that. If anything, marrying her made him calmer. He believed he only lost it when he feared he didn’t have her.

“Padme, don’t.” He urged. There was a panic in his voice. He reached up, wanting to touch her, his trembling hands hovering around her face. “I need you. I can’t do this without you.” He begged, shedding tears.

Staring at her pretty face, he continued to beg, “Please.”

All he knew was that he needed her comfort to feel better, to be better.

She placed her hands on his and slowly lowered them. “Okay, okay. Shh.” She soothed, calming him down.

He rested his head on her forehead, and watched her mouth.

She began to wipe his tears with her thumb. Breathing her in, he gripped onto waist — needing to feel her close.

She struggled with how weak she felt whenever he put his hands on her.

Especially now that she could feel his breath on her lips, it was even harder to resist him.

He reached up and cradled her face, and his lips touched hers for a moment as he desperately wanted to immerse himself in her. She could feel his heavy inhalations on her lips. Trembling, her body began to shudder at his touch. She hesitated, turning her face away, trying to not give into her impulses.

But as he hovered over her impatiently, she found herself giving in. With an enormous appetite, his lips searched for hers again, dying to steal a taste. She returned the kiss, offering her mouth as he forced his tongue inside.

Somehow he could take possession of her with one hungry embrace.

Deprived of reason, they were overcome with delicious desire to be one, as though breathing each other in gave them life.

Mature

Anakin lowered her body down on the couch and slumped himself over her. Resting his head above hers, consumed by his desire for her and only her.

He began to kiss her slowly, savouring the taste of her mouth. She couldn’t deny the electricity of passion between them.

The desperation and longing in their kisses reminded them just how connected they were to each other — for better or worse.

Padme reached up to touch his face — her finger tracing his bone structure, knowing the face of the man she loves like the back of her hand.

There was something so pure about their love, it was so strong and because of it they could withstand the heaviest storms long term yet in the short term, it was so fragile that it would bend to destruction if they couldn’t have it when they wanted it.

Unable to contain his desire, he reached down her body, his hand hovering inches away from her. Using the force, he lifted her dress up in desperation, and urgently pulled down her underwear, exposing her.

With another flail of his hand, he used the force to hurriedly remove his own trousers. And he finally entered her.

He let out a satisfied woozy groan as he slid into her. She felt an intense rush engulf her body once he was inside her.

She reached up, placing her hand on his chest and trailed her fingers down his torso, exploring his perfectly chiseled body.

As he made love to her, balancing both gentle and rough rhythms as they caressed each other, they were completely entwined.

“Ah, your happy place.” A voice called out. Anakin, whose hair was now damp as he sweat while making love to his wife, glanced around and noticed the monster in his head had taken form. He saw himself as what he considered to be an evil Anakin standing over them. “I’m sure that feels good.” Evil Anakin smirked, watching them.

Anakin did his best to ignore the figure beside them, knowing it was a figment of his imagination. He looked down at his wife, who lied beneath him, and enjoyed how pleased she looked. Pressing his hips into her, he pounded her, refocusing his attention.

He was successful. The figure had gone. He then reached up, grabbed her hands and held them over her head, his fingers intertwining with hers. Her soft moans weakening him as he rested his lips over hers.

This tender moment was quickly interrupted by evil Anakin, whose face was now beside his as he bent down. “But may I remind you that it was only yesterday that there was another man here. She let him in your house! Probably sat on this very couch.”

Anakin closed his eyes, consumed by the pleasure of being inside Padme, choosing to focus on what was right in front of him and ignore his fears.

But his thoughts, or in this case, evil Anakin, struck again. And Anakin was growing frustrated with the disruptions. “It did feel good beating him up though, didn’t it?” Evil Anakin chuckled. “I mean, come on, he deserved it. He tried putting his hands on your wife.” Evil Anakin watched as Anakin struggled to not tense up at the thought of Clovis and Padme together.

Gawking at her, Anakin watched her and admired how her lips parted slightly, how heavenly she sounded, and how soft she felt, but the monster in his head was getting harder to fight off — the fear of losing her to Clovis, whether real or not, was unbearable to even think about.

“Remember how it felt? Reaching up and wrapping your hand around his neck through the force. Strangling him. . . watching him almost take his last breath. You wanted revenge and you got it.” Anakin tried not to picture it but the images came in, in a flash. He pictured Clovis leaning over Padme, trying to force a kiss on her. And him arriving just in time to drag him into the air by his neck. He could feel his own fingers tightening around Clovis’ neck.

Padme had completely let loose, fully succumbing to the intense sensation that was building up to her climax. She began to scream out “Yes! yes!” with urgency, no longer able to control herself, feeling dizzy from the impact the orgasm had on her. As her body attempted to recover from the shakes, she arched her back from the overwhelming sensation and, suddenly, she felt Anakin’s fingers wrap around her neck.

As Anakin continued to picture that night and himself force choking Clovis, he could hear Padme's faint cries at him to stop in the background. Until he realized, it wasn't all in his head...

Anakin was brought back into the present, listening to Padme trying to yell at him to let go of her.

Shocked, he quickly removed his hand from her neck. She pushed his body off of hers and got up.

"Padme!" Anakin rushed over to her, "I'm so sorry, baby!" He stood there trembling. The last thing he wanted to do was make her feel unsafe.

Padme folded her arms, unable to look at him as she caught her breath.

"Padme," He pleaded again. "I'm sorry — Y-You know I'd never hurt you." *What's wrong with me?* He thought. He really needed to get it together.

"...I think you should go." She finally spoke.

"Padme—" His eyes widened with fear as he tried to reach out for her, but Padme squirmed away and remained firm.

"—Anakin!" She silenced him. "I *really* need some space."

Padme walked off into the bedroom, slamming the door shut behind her.

Padme sat on her bed, taking a moment to breathe.

It wasn't the act itself she took issue with. After all, this power dynamic they played with was a way they explored their passion. He desired control and in bed with her was when he got to take full control, she wanted him to feel that since he felt he had no control in every other aspect of his life. She, on the other hand, was often overwhelmed with how often she had to be in control as a senator. Even when she was queen, she hated the burden of all that power.

That's why she got so much satisfaction from relinquishing all control to him in the bedroom. And he was fulfilled getting to overpower her.

But this was different. This wasn't two lovers experimenting with their desires. She could feel his rage as he choked her, harder than he would have normally. There was something evil behind his actions.

Anakin let out a deep breath, and headed onto his ship, feeling foolish and incredibly remorseful.

In that moment, he heard the monster (evil Anakin) snicker in his head. "*If you can't possess it, you'll destroy it.*"

And the worst part was that the monster was right. Anakin would do anything to prevent his fears from coming true.

*I can't escape myself, so many times I've lied
But there's still rage inside
Somebody get me through this nightmare
I can't control myself
So what if you can see the darkest side of me?
No one will ever change this animal I have become
Help me believe it's not the real me
Somebody help me tame this animal*

Animal I've Become — Three Days Grace

18. All Is Fair In Love & War

AN: TroySharpay: Oh that makes me so happy! Thank you for the review as always
XOXO

All Is Fair In Love & War

*A broken heart is all that's left
I'm still fixing all the cracks
Lost a couple of pieces when
I carried it, carried it, carried it home*

*I'm afraid of what I am
My mind feels like a foreign land
Silence ringing inside my head
Please carry me, carry me, carry me home*

Anakin glanced at Padme's apartment as he flew by, thinking about how giddy he felt the first time he ever went up there. He missed that feeling.

He hovered in the air, noticing her coming out onto the balcony. She looked beautiful in a teal dress with her curly hair flowing down her back, the tendrils of her hair perfectly shaping the sides of her face. He wanted to go up there so badly, look into her brown eyes, hold her in his arms and smell her hair.

Padme looked out and spotted his ship. She looked longingly at it, feeling the distance between them. She folded her arms, breathing out. She wasn't ready to talk it out. Was it the war that was changing him? Or was this all a result of his unresolved issues? Either way, what concerned her most was who would he become?

Anakin didn't know what their future looked like right now either but he was determined to make things right. He needed to work on his anger and if he failed, he vowed to at least work on it around her. He became a contradiction — so confident one minute, and so full of self doubt the next. He believed he could sort himself but controlling his temper was getting harder and harder, the deeper he was embedded in this war.

Anakin, Obi-Wan and Ahsoka stood beside the ship, getting ready to go on their mission as Obi-Wan instructed.

"I'm sorry I won't be there with you." Obi-Wan concluded, "And Anakin... I know you'll have important decisions to make out there, and it won't be easy. But just know before you make a call, picture me, right behind you... saying 'Anakin no!'" He teased, and Ahsoka laughed.

Anakin rolled his eyes as a smirk emerged from his lips. After a pat on the back, Anakin led Ahsoka aboard the ship.

"Let's go get Rex!" Ahsoka encouraged as she started flying the ship.

Anakin was suddenly silent.

Ahsoka glanced at him, concerned. "Are you alright, master?"

Anakin was pulled out of his thoughts, and turned to face her.

"Ahsoka..." He murmured after a beat. "Do you trust me?"

Ahsoka looked at him and let out a light chuckle. "What do you think?"

"I mean it." He urged

Ahsoka was puzzled, trying to read him. Eventually noticing his distress, she answered assuredly. "With my life."

"You've seen me do some questionable things..." He paused. "Has it ever... changed what you think of me?" He couldn't look up at her.

"Where is this coming from?" Ahsoka kept her tone light but couldn't hide her confusion. She could see Anakin was not himself.

"Just answer the question." He said quietly.

Ahsoka sighed, "No." She finally spoke. "There's nothing you can do to make me doubt the man that you are."

Anakin shot her a warm smile. He needed that boost of confidence. He squeezed her arm lightly. "Thanks."

Ahsoka, Rex and Obi-Wan were no strangers to Anakin's unusual fighting style — and they definitely witnessed a few of his war crimes. But the Jedi Order as whole seemed to be taking darker approaches, the longer the war went on. This particular trip though, without Obi-Wan leading the charge, stayed with Rex and Ahsoka as they watched Anakin lose his patience during interrogations, force choking those who didn't give him the answers he wanted, and killing some even after they did.

Although they were completely taken aback by his unsettling behaviour, they stayed quiet, understanding that the darkness of the war had different effects on each warrior but with Anakin, specifically, they understood he was going through a whole other level of pressure.

Whether or not it was the right decision to remain silent, they chose to leave the judgment to a higher power.

As they headed back to Coruscant, Ahsoka was the first to say goodbye and head into the Jedi temple. Rex, remained inside the ship, double checking his equipment.

Anakin headed back onto the ship. Now hovering over Rex. Anakin clicked his tongue, letting out a heavy sigh as he pondered.

“Who else knows?” He asked. His voice was calm but rough — and Rex knew he was referring to their conversation before about catching him with the senator.

Rex turned around and looked up at him. “No one, sir.” He uttered

Anakin let out a tight exhale, about to leave before stopping himself.

“It’s gonna stay that way?” He asked, although it was clear to Rex that this wasn’t a question.

“You have my word.” Rex assured.

Anakin shot him a slow nod but Rex could feel the warmth and appreciation behind it.

Padme leaned against one of the pillars at the senate, trying to get a moment to herself among the crowd.

“Padme...” Anakin snuck up behind the pillar, making her jump in a fright when he popped his head round. She didn’t turn around, she knew it was him.

“What are you doing here?” She asked, breathlessly, hand on heart.

“I had to see you.” He whispered, “Are you okay?”

She kept her eyes firmly on the passersby, but she could feel his breath on the back of her neck.

“I’ve been better.” She drawled, hoping she was being as subtle as she thought she was.

They both remained silent as another member of the senate passed her, giving her a polite nod. She offered a faint smile back.

“...I’m trying to give you space.” He said after a beat. She could hear the anguish in his voice. “But it’s hard for me.”

“I know.” She breathed out, staring ahead with no focus.

“I’m... so sorry, Padme.” he pleaded, closing his eyes for a moment.

She cocked her head to the side, narrowing the space between them a little. “I know that too.” She spoke softly.

He lowered his head, closer to hers, smelling her hair. The little distance between them was excruciating.

She closed her eyes as she heard him breathe on her.

“Can I see you?” He asked, gazing at her brown eyes.

She turned her head away, pulling away from him slightly, letting out a slow exhale. “... Sometime.”

“Soon?” He urged, now touching her arm, holding onto it before she could walk away. That one touch made the sparks between them undeniable.

She finally looked up at him with a doleful expression on her face. “I don’t know.” She shrugged, lightly shaking her head.

She walked away. And all he could do was stare.

*Giving us up didn't take a lot
Giving pieces from my heart*

*I saw the end before it begun
Still I carried, I carried, I carry on*

*I've spent all of the love I saved
We were always a losing game*

I got addicted to a losing game

*Oh oh, all I know, all I know
Loving you is a losing game*

19. I'd Die Without You

AN: TroySharpay: Aww :D I don't wanna say I'm happy you're crying — but maybe just a little bit :D

DS2010: I know :DD

Mercenary29: Thank you so much! I really appreciate that! I didn't want to just write what we've already seen in the movies and show, so I'm so happy you like the changes xoxo

I'd Die Without You

*Wish you were lying here
I tend to dream you when I'm not sleeping
Even imagine your emotions to tell myself anything
Is it my turn to hold you by your hands
Tell you I love you and you not hear me
Is it my turn to totally understand
To watch you walk out of my life and not do a damn thing*

*If I have to give away the feeling that I feel
If I have to sacrifice oh whatever babe
If I have to take apart all that I am
Is there anything that I would not do?
'Cause inside I'd die without you*

Ahsoka arrived at Padme's apartment, watching the senator frantically pace across the room. She could tell Padme was stressed trying to arrange this get-together as she addressed the droids. The droids shuffled around, tweaking the seating arrangements Padme had switched up three times already.

"Padme?" Ahsoka caught up with her.

Padme turned around, "Ahsoka!" She seemed happy to see her, embracing her with a hug.

"Are you alright?" Ahsoka chuckled at the state of a high-strung Padme.

"Yes—well... I will be." Padme ran her fingers through the loose hair strands that had escaped her tight, low hair bun, trying to retain an ounce of calm. With a quick huff to adamantly get back to work, she cocked her head. "Do you need anything?" She asked, realizing that Ahsoka must have come here for a reason.

“Actually, master Skywalker sent me.”

“He did?” Padme’s brow furrowed.

“Yeah. He said today’s your big senator banquet thing. Thought you could use my help.” She instigated softly. *Big senator banquet thing* –that sounded like Anakin alright!

He remembered... Padme thought to herself. Well, it would’ve been hard for him to forget with her going on and on about the planning the last couple of months. “That’s sweet but—”

“—Please don’t send me back.” Ahsoka spoke before Padme could get a word in. “You know Anakin will only have me come right back here. He doesn’t exactly take no for an answer.”

Padme sighed. Looking into Ahsoka’s big, warm, wholesome eyes, she couldn’t turn her away. “Who am I kidding? Clearly I need all the help I can get.” Her face softened with a light chuckle.

As the two of them sat on the couch, going over the details of the gathering, Padme finally plucked up the courage to say what was on her mind.

“How is he?” A shaky, faint breath followed once she got the words out.

“Anakin? He’s fine.” Ahsoka replied. Her voice low and small, trailing off. Her eyes honed in on the coffee table with the decor items.

Padme knew she herself wasn’t taking their separation well, so she could only imagine how Anakin felt right now. Both feeling like a limb was missing whenever they were apart. She wanted to pry, aware that Ahsoka seemed somber at the topic of his well-being.

“Is... everything okay?” Padme probed lightly, meeting her eye level.

Ahsoka frowned. Her worrisome eyes catching her gaze. “I don’t know. Everyone’s... hanging in there, I guess. . .The war’s changing everyone. We’re all... constantly wondering whether we’re doing the right thing, and sometimes there’s no immediate way to tell.”

Padme’s doe-eyed expression and heartfelt gaze settled on Ahsoka as she placed her hand on hers. Ahsoka needed that. Perhaps they both did. A taste of warmth and comfort in an unforgiving time of war. Unknowingly yearning for and seeking the familiarity and guidance of the same man. One wanting her brother back, the other wanting her husband.

“I try to be strong—for the team, the troops.” Ahsoka paused, her feelings reminiscent of their last mission. “*Strong...*” She grumbled with a sneer. “These days it seems that if you’re not acting tough, if you allow yourself to be vulnerable or compassionate, you’re failing.”

Padme traced circles around her hair temple, understanding exactly what Ahsoka was referring to. Padme knew all too well just how quickly this war had desensitized people. It was this kind of logic that clouded the senate since the war began.

“It’s okay to be scared.” Padme said warmly. “Just... don’t let your fear dictate your actions. . .So many people think that being strong is all about fighting, violence. But I’ve come to find that those who resort to violence are the most afraid.”

Ahsoka appreciated her words. Somehow they comforted Ahsoka more than they did Padme herself. She couldn't help but recall Anakin's outburst, thinking about how much of his fear was behind his behaviour.

"The tendrils belong on the main table!" Padme berated the helpers just as Anakin walked through the door. Watching as she was spiraling in a panic, his lips curled into a smile. She was always passionate about the nitty gritty details.

He stood there, tall, strong and silent, with his arms folded. Waiting for her to look his way.

"Hi." Like a puff of smoke, her breathy words were blurted out as she finally stopped in her tracks at the sight of him. He calmly made his way over to her.

"Need some help?" He asked, placing a loose hair strand behind her ear. That subtle touch alone sent a shiver down her spine. "Ahsoka said there was a mixup." His hand lingered near her neck. His eyes admiring the delicate curve leading to her clavicle. It took them both a moment to pull back from getting lost in each other's lustful glances.

His padawan informed him that she had offered to go out and get the required ornaments herself after Padme kept receiving ones she wasn't too fond of. So Anakin decided to swing by, whether Padme would appreciate it or not.

Padme swallowed a gulp once faced with his broad chest. Her skin prickling from the tender touch his rough, calloused finger left behind her ear, on her neck. "Uh—" She caught herself, fixing the placement of the hair strand he just rubbed between his thumb and index finger—not allowing herself to wallow in the electrifying pull he had on her.

"Well," She uttered breathlessly before they were interrupted by a droid asking her to choose an outfit.

"Red. Senator Aang is big on red." She hurriedly affirmed.

"You do look ravishing in red." Anakin subtly winked at her. She glanced up awkwardly. His devilishly charming half smirk graced his lips as he watched her cheeks turn red — all hot and flustered.

His inappropriate comment caught her off guard. And she was still in shock from him showing up out of the blue. With a strong exhale, she turned away from him to keep her cool. Luckily for her, C3PO intervened — until he informed her of worse news: the cake was lacking fruit.

That certainly snapped her out of whatever haze Anakin had pulled over her eyes.

"We still don't have fruit for the cake?!" She pretty much uttered to herself. Her patience was wearing thin. She shook her head furiously, closing her eyes. "No, no, no. This needs to be perfect. Senator Aang is very particular and we need to impress him."

"Padme." Anakin's deep voice and ruggedness stilled her movement. His hands holding her arms in place. "You need to relax."

Her breathing finally stabilized as his soothing drawl cleared her head.

“Go lie down for a while. So you can be fresh for later. I’ll handle this.” He ordered — which, much to Padme’s liking, relieved a lot of her stress. She took a wobbly step back once he let go of her, distancing herself from the warmth radiating from his body onto hers. She appreciated his help, though. It made her a little giddy, watching him take charge — even if she was uncertain what the outcome of tonight’s event would be.

Anakin entered her apartment a few hours after he had left. The banquet was over, and Padme was clearing up the table.

“How was it?” He asked, creeping up behind her. She could recognize his scent anywhere. She smiled to herself before turning around to face him.

“It was a success.” She breathed out. Her eyes now met his. Holding his gaze, her affection for him lingered — she began rubbing her hands together slowly as they felt so dry from all the lugging around she did earlier.

“I told you it would be.” He cocked his head to one side in a slightly arrogant manner — grinning at her. She couldn’t stop a warm smile escaping her lips.

“Thanks.” She murmured “For everything.”

Anakin’s eyes skimmed hers down to her lips. He felt exhilarated as he now fixated on her mouth. He bent down to admire her closely. “. . .Anything for you.”

His raspy drawl curved her back and parted her lips. She felt a heavy breath come from deep within her chest once his mouth was so close to her face.

She was almost afraid to look him in the eye, knowing his bright, bold and penetrating gaze awaited her. When she finally did, it transfixed her.

The tension was palpable. His eyes worshipped her. His lips so close to hers, he could taste her tongue. Their bodies both took turns to involuntarily move toward each other, followed by a conscious step back on her part.

Anakin let out a stiff exhale, titillated by the sight of her in that red dress that teased her curves just enough to have him craving more. Sexual frustration and a burning hunger for her were not a good combination — as his steadfast gaze remained on the sway of her hips once she stepped back. Her imploring eyes proved that her resolve was cracking, which he appreciated. But he also knew if he gave into his desire now, even for one night, before she was ready, it’ll only leave her more confused in the morning. And all he wanted was his wife to come back to him confidently. And after everything that happened with Clovis, Anakin needed to prove that he wasn’t a slave to his urges and emotions. Maybe he was learning from Obi-Wan after all — discipline will pay off.

Just as it couldn’t get anymore uncomfortable between them — both about to explode with desire — he looked into her eyes, letting out a weakened, almost silent groan, and stepped back.

“Good night, Padme.” He drawled.

She bit her lip to stop it from quivering. Surprised by his farewell. "...Good night." She whimpered.

She was about to lean forward once more, her body aching for his, but came to an abrupt halt as he broke the ice with a rough exhale. He turned away and walked out the door.

She placed her hand on the door as it closed, resting her forehead on it for a moment, missing him.

On the other end, once the door shut behind him, he too couldn't quite leave yet. He mustered all the strength he had to walk away in that moment.

He now leaned his back against the door, brushing the back of his knuckles on it, thinking about how much he wanted to go back in.

*Oh, I apologize for all the things I've done
But now I'm underwater and I'm drowning
Is it my turn to be the one to cry*

*So take every little piece of my heart
So take every little piece of my soul
Take every little piece of my mind
'Cause if you're gone... inside...*

I'd die without you...

20. Wicked

AN: Thank you so so much for the lovely reviews! I've been a little delayed this week, so as a thank you for your support, here's 2 chapters :D XO

Wicked

*Take me I'm alive
Never was a boy with a wicked mind
But everything looks better when the sun goes down*

*I had everything
Opportunities for eternity
And I could belong to the night*

*Your eyes, your eyes
I can see in your eyes your eyes*

*I'll never be good enough
You make me wanna die
And everything you love
Will burn up in the light
And every time I look inside your eyes
You make me wanna die*

Stranded on Scipio, coming to learn all about Clovis' deal with Count Dooku, Padme knew there was only one person she wanted to call.

Despite needing space from him to figure out where they stood in their marriage, in times of crises, Anakin was the one who made her feel safe. She knew she had to call the Chancellor and inform him of the situation but this moment made her realize exactly why she seemed to abandon her convictions and fall at his feet, like at her banquet: she wanted her husband.

After calling the Chancellor, and getting to see Anakin's face, she was glad he was the one sent to rescue her.

As General Skywalker and the troops headed to Scipio, Anakin did his best to keep Yoda's words in mind. Things were not what they seem and he needed to remain calm, despite his emotions.

He turned to Rex. “Rex, I need you to locate Padme.” He whispered — all the fear he had was written on his face, and Rex knew Anakin was struggling to hide how worried he was.

“Don’t worry.” Rex said softly, reassuring Anakin with his comforting tone that everything was alright and she’s alive.

Anakin arrived to find Clovis and Padme on the roof. Clovis quickly grabbed Padme, taking her hostage to avoid Anakin rushing over and slicing him in half with his lightsaber — which he’d likely do after their last encounter.

Anakin kept replaying Yoda’s words over and over to keep his feelings at bay. Padme’s life depended on it, and he couldn’t risk her safety.

Anakin and Padme stared longingly into each other’s eyes. Everything was communicated in that moment, and they understood each other perfectly. Anakin fearing her death, Padme fearing their safety, losing each other, wishing they had resolved their argument before things ended up like this, now wanting to forgive each other for all that had happened.

As Clovis desperately tried to plead his case, Anakin wasn’t hearing any of it — warning him to let Padme go.

“Clovis, you have to turn yourself in.” Padme interjected, trying to talk sense into a frantic Clovis who feared what would happen to him.

“I’m not the villain here!” He cried. His quivering hand holding the gun up to her head. “What will they think of me?!”

“You’ll have a better chance of clearing your name.” Padme said calmly.

“No I won’t! No one will trust me. My reputation will be tarnished. I have no choice but to do this!” Clovis looked around, desperate for salvation.

“Perception is reality, Padme. You know that.” He glanced at Anakin and then at Padme, watching as their eyes fixed on each other. He could see their connection despite how many times she said there was nothing going on between them. “People believe what they want. Your boyfriend almost killed me and you’re still gonna choose him over me, I can see it in your eyes. . . My intentions don’t matter, I’ll always be known as the man who betrayed the republic.”

Padme’s somber eyes still locked with Anakin’s, whose eyes were carefully concocting a plan to get her out of here. His ignited lightsaber in hand. Inside he was raging — trying his hardest to think clearly, fearing for his wife’s life.

As a vulture droid crashed into the building, Clovis and Padme slid down the edge. Anakin managed to grab them albeit struggling to hold them both. Clovis demanded to be let go and eventually released himself from Anakin’s grip and fell to his death, leaving Padme in shock.

Anakin managed to pull Padme up but the building continued to crumble. The floor underneath them was on its last legs, and Anakin had to use the force to hold it up. A

frightened Padme in the arms of her husband looked up at him in a panic.

Anakin glanced at the exit, wondering how they were both going to get over to it without him letting go of the floor he was holding up for them to stand on.

“Padme, I’m gonna hold the floor up for as long as I can. You just need to reach the door.” He insisted but Padme anxiously shook her head, terrified. “I need you to go down, find a ride and come pick me up before the building falls.” He continued.

“No, no, Anakin, I can’t leave you! What if it all falls on you?!” She shrieked, holding onto him even tighter.

“You’ll get here in time.” He assured

“No — I — I can’t do it!” She stammered

“Padme. Listen to me.” He soothed, his hand cupping the side of her face, forcing her to meet his unwavering gaze. “I need you to stay calm, baby. You can do this. I trust you.”

Those last three words quietened her mind. The three words he denied after their big fight. He knew she needed to hear it, and he wanted her to know he meant it.

Once she got out, Padme managed to steal one of the ships of the fleet, and flew under the roof for Anakin to jump down before he let go of the building’s structure.

Landing beside it, they watched the entire tower crumble.

“I’m sorry.” Padme quaked. Her hands haphazardly flailing about in the air. Anakin put his arm around her, offering her words of solace.

He wanted people to affirm his belief about Clovis. Yoda finally did. But hearing Padme apologize for it all now made him less boastful. All that mattered was Clovis hadn’t harmed her.

The fact that his concerns regarding Clovis were now considered legitimate by everyone around him only enabled Anakin to trust his instincts. He felt no empathy for his death — hell, he would’ve killed Clovis if he had touched her — but Padme did. He could sense it. She felt awful.

In this moment with her in his arms, he realized that all he wanted to do was keep her safe, and that would mean he needed to start thinking before he acts. Doing so was what got them out of this mess alive.

Anakin flew the ship back to Coruscant, letting a disoriented Padme rest in the passenger seat.

Once they landed, she finally spoke.

“He killed himself.” She blubbered in shock. “He’d rather... die a good man than live as a criminal.”

Anakin looked ahead at the Jedi temple in the distance, mumbling. “He wasn’t a good man either way.”

Padme turned to face him, noticing the bitterness in his voice. It seemed as though she could finally breathe after the events that just transpired.

“Anakin...” She placed her hand on his after a beat. ‘I don’t have feelings for Clovis. I never did. . .I love *you*. I know you’d do anything for the people you love.’ She paused, realizing they had to get it all out in the open. “But... would you *kill* for those you love?” She looked down sheepishly. “How far would you go?”

Anakin’s eyes finally met hers. He knew what she was saying. She wasn’t entirely over it all. “Padme... I wouldn’t have killed him.” His voice low and firm before leaning towards her. “Look at me, it’s *me*.” His hands now on her shoulders. She looked at the face of her husband. Every inch of his face felt familiar. His chin dimple that was even more visible when he was serious. His blue eyes that could go from so cold to so warm in a heartbeat. His strong jaw that he clenched whenever he was determined to do things his way. And of course, his smile. The smile that made her world stop.

But he wasn’t smiling now. His eyes weren’t warm now. He was angry and it showed on his face. This anger that seemed to override all his emotions lately.

Padme’s melancholic eyes rested on his before shaking her head. “I don’t know who’s in there sometimes.”

Anakin leaned back, trying not to sound frustrated as a puff of air escaped his lips. “Padme, I told you, I wasn’t thinking that night. I was angry and jealous and afraid. And — he was all over you!”

Despite her unsteady inhales, she remained calm. “You can’t control everyone. You can’t make them behave the way you want them to. You just have to trust in yourself... and me.”

His eyes burned a hole on the ground as she spoke.

“Trust that I’ll do the right thing.” She continued after a beat. Her voice warmer now, hoping to get through to him. He nodded in agreement.

Anakin ran his fingers through his fringe. “I didn’t realize what I was doing until I saw him lying helpless on the floor. I made a mistake... It’s just, the thought of the two of you, and him forcing himself on my wife.” Another heavy breath left his chest. ‘I snapped but. . .’ He paused, remembering what he did to her neck, and regret ensued. “I’d never hurt you.”

Padme was silent. She believed him but she could sense his hostility and regret fighting within him.

Clicking his tongue, Anakin tried to make sense of it — even he struggled to understand himself. “Look, we’re in the middle of a war... It’s stressful and the pressure—. . .things got messy but I won’t let it happen again, I promise you—”

—“Be careful who it turns you into.” Padme’s words were almost a plea. “Look at Clovis... The man I worked with all those years ago would never have made the decisions he made now.”

Anakin couldn't hide his irritation. He wanted to be gentle, sympathetic to the death of her "friend" but it was too personal. He wanted his wife back, and if it wasn't for Clovis, would they have fought at all? He didn't seem to think so.

He leaned his head on the back of the seat.

"I love you, Anakin, more than anything." She declared as she leaned closer to him. Her earnest eyes weakened his as he sat there maintaining a hard exterior and rigid jaw.

"Then what's so bad about all this..." He groaned with an impatient, desperate scoff. 'What's wrong with saying I'm so in love you, I'd do anything for you.' He shrugged. "Yeah, I would kill for you. I'm not gonna lie — if it meant protecting you. Isn't that a good thing? You're safe with me!"

Padme's shook her head slightly as she parted her lips. "I don't want you to lose yourself, Anakin." She whimpered. "I love you too much to let you do that for me. I want your love to be a choice that you want to make everyday, not something you need to do no matter the cost. That's not love, that's obsession."

Anakin huffed, almost annoyed as he cocked his head to one side. "What's the difference?"

"The fact that you have to ask..." She sighed. Taking a moment, she let out a breathy, anxious chuckle.

"That's why Master Yoda told you to be wary of how passionate you are." She reasoned. "Don't let it become some wicked, twisted obsession."

With a sympathetic, faint smile, she reached for the door.

He grabbed her arm and pulled her back, planting one slow, soft passionate kiss on her lips, tipping her chin with his thumb. The kiss was hypnotizing. Her head spun, heartbeat raced, as his tongue explored her mouth.

He then leaned back, holding her eyes with his once she opened hers. It took her a moment to snap back to reality. Lost in the rush she felt, not realizing how much she had pined for that feeling.

She gradually found her bearings and got out of the ship.

Anakin watched her leave. As wistful as he felt, he was determined to give her the security she longed for.

*I would die for you my love
I would lie for you my love
I would steal for you my love
I would die for you my love
We'll burn up in the light*

*And every time I look inside your eyes
You make me wanna die*

21. Ghost Of You

Ghost Of You

*I keep going to the river to pray
'Cause I need something that can wash all the pain
And at most, I'm sleeping all these demons away
But your ghost, the ghost of you
It keeps me awake*

"I lost them." Boba Fett announced, joining Vader.

"That is most disappointing." Vader expressed with a snarl.

"He got lucky." Boba scoffed but Vader wouldn't turn to face him. He seemed uninterested in the chit-chat but found the familiarity of Boba's voice comforting these days.

"Did you bring me anything of value, bounty hunter?" He monotonously asked.

"Not much. Just his name... *Skywalker*."

Vader cocked his head to the side. His chest pounding as he tried to curb his reaction. The mention of that name turned his stomach. Did he even hear it correctly? Perhaps his cognitive abilities have faltered. His mind has definitely been playing tricks on him from time to time, ever since his duel with Obi-Wan 9 years ago.

How was it possible? This boy is a Skywalker. The boy the force seemed to surround. And that could only mean one thing.

The baby he mourned, the one he never met, the one that died along with his wife, the one he sensed when Padme's spirit came to stop him from committing suicide — that baby is, in fact, alive.

"Skywalker." Vader clenched his fist. It couldn't possibly be true. Someone must know Vader's true identity and is playing a wicked game.

*My friends had you figured out
Yeah they saw what's inside of you
You try and hide in another you
But your evil was coming through
Bright light living in the shade
Your cold heart makes the spirits shake*

I had to go through hell to prove I'm not insane

Had to meet the devil just to know his name

And that's when my love was burning

Yeah it's still burning

Anakin walked out of Palpatine's office as Padme was heading down the hall. Catching her eye, he faintly smiled at her. She glanced around and back at him, he stood there and gave her a little nod, gesturing for her to come over and join him behind a wall. She obliged.

"I've been thinking... about what you said." He said once she snuck over to him. He let out a deep breathe, his warm eyes gazing at her. He didn't leave much space between them, cornering her to the wall. Resting her head back on it, she coyly glanced up at him. With one hand holding himself up against the wall beside her, the other reached up and lightly stroked her cheek with the back of his index finger "...my fault, my failure is not the passions I have but my lack of control of them." He grinned but the curl of his lips soon faded. His face now offered a more serious expression as he adorably tried to put his thoughts into words. "Losing control of your passions leads to obsession... Love is controlled passion. And... I want to be someone who exhibits control. I wanna be that guy for you... and myself."

Padme felt a sense of relief as she looked up at him. She couldn't help but let a huge grin smear across her face. As much as she thought she should take it slow, she could see it in his bright blue eyes... he was still *him*, and she believed in him.

"If you want to then you will be. It's up to you." She beamed up at him, smiling sweetly. He was waiting to see her smile at him again — a genuine, hopeful smile. He narrowed the already little space between them, feeling giddy. His lips inches away from hers, his body couldn't help but gravitate towards her.

"I'm trying." He said as he hovered over her, his skin burning to touch hers.

"I know. You're a good man." She said breathlessly, trying to alleviate some of the tension — she wanted to embrace him and just go back to normal but she stopped herself.

He could feel her hesitation. His body yearned for hers but he did his best to fight the urge to close the gap.

He finally took a step back, took another glance around, and settled his eyes back on hers.

"Meet me here tomorrow." He urged in a harsh whisper. She could hear the desperation in his voice. "I've got a couple hours in Coruscant. Let's get away... we can talk." His imploring eyes were hard to ignore. He licked his lips and she couldn't tear her eyes away from his mouth. As he tried to keep his voice down, the sound of his muffled voice alone made her certain she wasn't going to turn down his invitation.

"How?" She sighed, knowing neither of them were free at the moment.

"I'll figure something out — just dress inconspicuous."

"Inconspicuous?" She cocked an eyebrow.

“Yeah you know — not your typical full regalia.” He softly mocked her, playfully rolling his eyes, and once again convinced her with an irresistible half smirk.

*Each time that I think you're gone
I turn around and you're creeping in
And I let you under my skin
'Cause I love living in sin
Oh, you never told me
True love was gonna hurt
True pain I don't deserve
Truth is that I never learn*

Vader arrived on Polis Massa with the forensics droid ZED, desperate to find out what exactly happened with Padme and the baby.

But as the droid struggled to access the medical logs, they found a gun aimed at them.

“Stop!” The armed woman did not show an ounce of fear, unlike anyone else who stood in Vader’s path.

Vader looked at her, studying her face, and for a moment, his movements were stilled. Realizing she must have followed him here.

“Get out of my way.” He said calmly.

“No. I’m not afraid of anyone who works for the Empire!” She snapped, getting a firmer grip on her gun.

“You should be... *Sabe*.” The power in Vader’s robotic voice was noticeable but while his tone was stern, he wasn’t aggressive.

Sabe didn’t seem to jump at the realization that the often whispered about Supreme Commander of the imperial military knew who she was.

“Is that supposed to scare me?” She hissed. “*You* should be scared of me. I think you forget I was instructed to keep a lot of secrets. I’m not afraid to die because of them.”

Her cryptic message wasn’t that cryptic at all. Vader ended up being the one taken aback by their interaction.

“Don’t make me hurt you. Step aside.” He eventually spoke. “I don’t usually give warnings.” He added as she remained still.

Relieved that she had finally figured it out and trusted her instincts when she followed him here, she slowly shook her head. “Wow... I knew something must’ve happened.” She glared at him. “I mean, it’s not a coincidence that she died when the republic fell. And when you didn’t show up at her funeral, I knew... I knew you had something to do with it. No one ever found out what happened to Jedi General Skywalker.” She couldn’t hide the bitterness and mockery in her tone.

Vader tensed up, wanting to strangle Sabe and silence her. But he didn't. Instead his mind was clouded by all the grief he tried to suppress. Padme's death. Believing she betrayed him, bringing Obi-Wan to kill him... and he ended up killing her — the person he loved more than anything.

"My lord, there's no baby." ZED interrupted his thoughts, causing both Vader and Sabe to turn to face him. "She gave birth before she died."

So the boy is our son. Vader took a step back before roaring at the forensics droid, "Who was there?! Who was with her and let her die?!"

ZED hurriedly continued rummaging through the logs, unable to provide any answers. Vader turned to glance at Sabe who was staring at him, intermittently.

After several attempts, the droid finally found something — a holorecording, and accidentally pressed play.

The sound surprised them all.

"Obi-Wan, there's good in him. I know there's still..."

The sound of Padme's voice transfixed Vader.

He couldn't take it. She still believed in him up until her dying breath. Obi-Wan was there for her when she gave birth. And she had faith that Anakin would return. And then their baby was left parentless.

"Shut it off!" Vader growled before storming off.

*Give up the ghost, give up the ghost
Give up the ghost, stop the haunting baby
Give up the ghost, give up the ghost
Give up the ghost, no more haunting baby
I keep going to the river...*

22. Breathe Me

AN:

DS2010: So happy to hear your thoughts on the last two chapters XO

TroySharpay: OH that makes me so happy! XO

Breathe Me

*You say I've been driving you crazy
And it's keeping you away
So just give me one good reason
Tell me why I should stay
'Cause I don't wanna waste another moment
Saying things we never meant to say*

*And I... take it just a little bit
I... hold my breath and count to ten
I've... been waiting for a chance to let you in*

Padme met Anakin behind the senate building once he pulled up in an unknown speeder.

"What is this?" She chuckled, crinkling her forehead.

"Thought we could take a little joyride." He smirked, resting his arm on the window.

"In an old, worn out, *stolen* speeder?" She teased.

"It's not stolen. . .if I bring it back." A soft smile escaped his lips.

Confused, she hesitated getting in. "What is all this?"

Anakin shrugged. "A date."

"A date?" She cocked an eyebrow. He met her gaze with another smirk.

She seemed squirmish, biting her fingernail. "Anakin, I—" she began to protest but he cut her off.

"—Come on." He urged softly. "It's a chance for us to get away from everything and figure it all out. . .and be a married couple — not a senator and Jedi."

"A married couple..." She repeated.

After a deep breath, she finally hopped in the speeder.

They were silent for the first few minutes as he flew off. Taking glances at each other in their inconspicuous attire — more consumed with what was underneath.

After a big inhale, she finally spoke, slapping her thigh. “Okay. Where should we start?”

“I’d rather not.” He said, cracking his neck. A doe-eyed look on her face as she turned to face him.

“You said this was a chance for us to get away and talk!” She reminded.

Anakin seemed very calm.

“Maybe talking’s overrated. Maybe what we need is to just go back to basics.” He shot her another glance, as his eyes darted from her face to her body before quickly facing forward.

“We need to talk about everything that’s happened.” She reiterated.

“Why? We already tried that.” He insisted with a shrug. “Maybe we need to stop thinking and overanalyzing and just do... just be... together.”

A slow exhale left his lips before turning back to her.

“It’s what we’re good at.” His raspy drawl had her swallowing a gulp.

“That’s the problem.” She sat up straight, remaining sharp. “We’re not so good at the healthy stuff.”

“...This is healthy too, Padme. It helps... it helps us remember what’s really important. Us.”

When she didn’t answer, he continued, “Half our fights are really just because we’re resentful that we can’t spend more time together.”

He glanced at her once more, noticing her twiddling her thumbs.

“Well...” She finally breathed out. “We’re together now.” A faint smile began to form on her lips.

As he headed down the lower levels of Coruscant, her suspicious eyes studied him. “Where are you taking me?”

“Do you need to know everything?” He groaned with a chuckle as he parked.

He walked around and opened her door, offering her a hand.

She took it and he pulled her up.

As they walked along the busy streets, everyone seemed to be minding their own business. Nobody cared that they were together — nobody knew them.

“See, here, we can do this.” His fingers entwined with hers as they held hands.

She beamed up at him. He was right, it felt nice to be normal.

Skipping down the street, arms swaying forward and back, he finally stopped midway once he saw a flower stand.

“Come on.” His voice was low but enthusiastic, dragging her over there.

“Hello, good sir!” Anakin always knew how to command attention. The florist offered an equally cheerful greeting. “What’s your name?”

“Gleb.” The florist replied.

“Well, Gleb.” Anakin placed his hand on his chest. ‘I’m uh... –Luke.’ He added quickly, pointing to Padme. “And uh this is my beautiful wife... Marla.”

“Tell me, do you have anything as beautiful as she is?” Anakin began scanning the display.

Padme closed her eyes, sheepishly, covering her mouth and hiding an embarrassed chuckle under her shawl.

“Yes, yes, of course!” Gleb replied. “Uh, here!”

Anakin turned to Padme. “Which ones do you like?”

Padme shot him a glance that he knew was an undetectable eye roll. But he knew she was secretly loving it. There was never a dull day with Anakin Skywalker.

She then bent over to see the various types of bouquets.

“...I like these.” She pointed out and the florist pulled them up and handed them over to her.

She got a whiff and the scent was almost cathartic. Anakin could see she admired them.

“You like ’em?” He grinned

Her twinkling eyes looked up at him and then at Gleb. “They’re wonderful.”

“We’ll take ’em.” Anakin stated.

“Good choice!” The florist insisted. “...You know, if you gift these flowers to someone then you’re connected for life... even after death.” He explained as Anakin paid him.

“Hmm.” Anakin amused with the news, turned to Padme with a slightly smug expression on his face. “You hear that?”

Padme hid her smirk behind the bouquet.

*Well, it's all so overrated
In not saying how you feel
So you end up watching chances fade
And wondering what's real*

*And I... give you just a little time
I... wonder if you realize*

I've... been waiting 'til I see it in your eyes

Once they grabbed a couple of hot sandwiches and headed back to the speeder, Anakin was already devouring his food while Padme stared at him, humoured by the whole evening.

"Luke?" Her brows furrowed, mocking him.

"What? I had to think fast." He coyly grinned, and she rolled her eyes.

"What?! You don't like the name?" He probed

"It's just a little... plain... and simple." She shrugged, taking a bite of her sandwich.

"The simplest things in life are the best." He gave her a cocky nod.

Padme playfully huffed, not taking him seriously.

"Do you even know what it means?" He teased

"No, I don't." She matched his smug tone, trying to conceal a smile.

"It means bringer of light." He paused. His mind wandered, contemplating that thought. 'We could all use a little light.' He answered with a simper. "After all, the light of the sun on the horizon when morning comes, always gave me hope that I'm coming home."

She gazed at him intently, now fully displaying a wholesome smile and hanging on every word. He then met her gaze with a twinkle in his eye.

She remembered him telling her this when asking how he stayed hopeful amid the war, and she knew he was asking to come home to her again.

"Well," She sighed, appreciating his sincerity.

". . .I'm *enlightened*." She joked, letting out a girlish chuckle to which he playfully nudged her arm.

"And where did you get Marla?" She continued after a beat.

"I have no idea." He grinned foolishly. "Pulled that one out of the air."

She shared his giddy grin, with a steadfast gaze on his smile.

"Eh," He sighed. "It's hard to find a name as pretty as Padme."

His cheeky grin softened, and a heartfelt smile replaced hers.

He grabbed the parchment paper their sandwiches were wrapped in once they were done eating and placed it in a little bin behind their seats.

She looked down at her flowers, and inhaled the scents once more.

He watched her. There was something so pure about her beauty, and the way she saw the beauty in everything around her.

"They really are beautiful." She said once she caught his gaze on her.

Anakin nodded before shooting her a faint smile once her eyes found his.

As an exhale left his chest, he clicked his tongue, “You heard our good friend Gleb... the couple that shares these flowers are linked for life.” He beamed.

“Well...” Padme glanced at the flowers again before shooting a determined gaze at her husband. “He must’ve been talking about us.”

A surprised Anakin appreciated her approval.

“So, where to?” She filled the silence, breaking eye contact.

“Wherever you want.” He drawled.

“How much time have you got?” She asked.

“About half an hour.” He guessed and she placed the flowers on the floor of the speeder.

Her penetrating eyes now bold as they settled on him. “Why don’t we... park somewhere *private*?”

Mature

Anakin parked the speeder in a secluded area. He turned to face her, his insides squirming with excitement but on the outside he remained calm. Her soft brown eyes weakening him as she rested her head on the back of the seat.

Her heart was pounding in her chest once he looked at her. The way any woman would want to be looked at by the man she yearns for — with such intensity. Sometimes she wondered if he knew how gorgeous he looked when he stared at her like that.

And she couldn’t make either of them wait any longer. She pulled herself up onto his lap, lifting the skirt of her dress up to rest on her upper thighs.

Nothing but their breaths disrupted the silence. He rested his hands on either side of her hips, swallowing a gulp as he watched her intently.

Despite her shaky inhalations which she fought to control, she was sure that she wanted this more than anything. She leaned forward and brushed his lips lightly with hers.

The touch of their lips felt like coming up for air. As their lips touched and parted in unison, they shared each other’s breaths. She bit his bottom lip, causing his hands to squeeze her body tighter, pulling her in to press up against him.

Their cheeks flushed from the heat pulsing between their bodies. The taste of her had him wanting to claim her, but his hands returned to her side, afraid to lose control.

She began to moan softly, surrendering to his tongue in her mouth. Neither one of them could hold back anymore, and his fingers gripped her hips tightly.

She began to rub herself over his rock hard bulge under his pants. He could feel his crotch gathering her wetness as the hot fluid leaked all over him.

He quickly lifted her up to undo his trousers and pull them down.

Now finally skin on skin, his throbbing erection couldn't be tamed as her sex soaked him. Without hesitation, he pushed his shaft into her. Both groaning as she slid her body all the way down.

Her hands, tangled in his long hair, were now sinking into his back before pulling his shirt off. His eyes sharply focused on the sway of her hips as she urgently mounted him.

His hands hovered beside her neck, and she could feel his fingertips lightly brush against her jaw. His eyes idolizing the edges and curves of her neck.

She grabbed his hands and placed them on her bouncing breasts, looking into his eyes. He gawked at her soft, lush curves. She could hear his breathing intensify — it sounded like he mumbled a cuss word under his breath from the overwhelming stimulation.

As she rode him, she gripped the wrist of his left hand and held it up to her mouth. Kissing his index finger lightly before stroking it with her tongue, nurturing the roughness his skin endured from all his battles in the war. She then made room for his middle finger in her mouth as well. He eagerly watched her sensual mouth envelop his fingers — licking his lips to avoid salivating over her.

Her lips then approached his thumb. Her mouth wrapped around it and slowly sucked down to the end. Her eyes fixating on his as her tongue swirled around, lubricating it. Whatever she was doing with her tongue almost tipped him over the brink.

As he watched her lips slowly pull away, she refused to let go of his wrist, placing his hand over her neck. As his now moist fingers lingered on her, she could feel his hesitation.

"Put your hands on me." She whimpered. His thumb, covered in her saliva, caressed her chin, leaving a drop.

"You sure?" He asked quietly, looking deeply into her eyes, and she nodded.

"I trust you." She murmured

"Padme—" His rough whisper of her name only made her more impatient. "We don't have to—"

"—You said let's go back to being us before all that stuff happened. . .So let's *be* us." She whined. Her voice even more urgent. "Touch me."

His wet fingers wrapped around her neck, making sure not to hurt her. This only made her hand press his tighter against her skin as she craved his strength. With a lascivious cry, her body swirled on top of him — uncontrollable movements as her wild desires were rewarded with his hand tightening around her neck, loving the obscene show of his dominance.

She was gone. He sent her over the edge, she almost blacked out. There was nothing but the two of them in this world.

Their faces suffused with color, as their brutal arousal would not rest. His pelvis lifted to meet her, and his aggression took over. His hard thrusts weakening her legs.

Her now limp body relinquished all control to him, as he pushed her body down onto him harder and faster. She felt his hand clasp the back of her neck before pulling her hair back, her mouth open, her skin damp and hot from all the movement.

The slippery sounds and feel of her sliding down his quivering member made him dizzy.

He forcefully continued to drive himself through her. She could hear him grunting as he held her body in place to thrust into her fully and rapidly.

As she felt him fill her up, her back arched. His hand that yanked her hair back now cupped her face, his thumb pressed over her lips. Staring at her with irrational passion — unable to close his mouth as his fierce, devouring eyes watched her wet, hot body dance on top of him. The mist from all the sweat steaming up the space between them was making him lose his mind as he focused on her. Their hair was damp — and her sweaty hand could barely hold onto his shoulder. She began to scream. And his hand now covered her mouth to muffle her loud moans.

Her muscles contracted and her whole body began to violently shudder during orgasm. He felt her walls pulsing as her body tensed up, every muscle drawn taut. His organ swollen from the tight grip she had, holding him inside her. Before he went off like a gunshot, there was a cadence in his groans as he tried to keep it together. The head of his organ tingled as the buildup was staggering.

The mindblowing sensation had him reach a climax — it was almost too much.

Her area loosened the grip on him. His sensitive shaft pulled out of her and she crawled off of him, heading back to the passenger seat.

Both trying to catch their breath as they sat there, slouched and sweaty.

He glanced over at her, mesmerized as he stared at what was between her legs.

“You better cover up.” He said roughly, looking at her with tenderness as he rested the side of his head on the seat. “I won’t be able to control myself.”

She smiled at him. Their hunger satiated, their eyes expressed their gratitude for each other.

And in this moment they knew... they needed each other like the air they breathe.

They lived and breathed each other. They were one no matter what.

*If I just breathe
Let it fill the space between
I'll know, everything is alright
Breathe
Every little piece of me, you'll see
Everything is alright*

23. Mine

AN:

Princesselsaamidala22: Thank you for the review! xo

DS2010: haha! They're making up for lost time ;)

Mercenary29: Thank you! I'm glad you like the "Luke" mention. Also thank you so much for your review on my other story. I was a new writer then so I appreciate you taking the time to check it out. I'm still new to writing for star wars but after dabbling into this couple with this story, I'd definitely like to do more, some "What If" type ones.

Mine (Always, Forever)

Feels like I'm standing in a timeless dream

Of light mists of pale amber rose

Feels like I'm lost in a deep cloud of heavenly scent

Touching, discovering you

"Use the next few days to rest." Obi-Wan requested. "You need this meditative retreat... we all do."

He and Anakin headed into the senate building on their way to meet Palpatine. Obi-Wan rarely made this trip, refusing to dabble in politics but for the sake of propriety, he did.

Obi-Wan went on about the war but Anakin barely heard him. His eyes now focused on Padme, who was walking over to them with a member of staff.

"Senator Amidala," Obi-Wan brightly spoke as she caught up with them. "Always a pleasure."

"Please, Obi-Wan. Call me Padme." She chuckled. "It's only been a few years!" She teased. Obi-Wan shot her an amused nod.

"General Skywalker." She greeted as delicately as possible. But Anakin's demeanor wasn't as subtle, as he grinned at her.

Obi-Wan noticed Anakin's body language shift — an almost impatient rush of excitement overcame him as his eager eyes fixated on her.

Obi-Wan knew subtlety was never a trait Anakin could master. After all, he had spent almost 3 years watching the guy's infatuation over the senator build.

But this was the first time Obi-Wan noticed Padme being just as reactive to his presence.

Her heartfelt smile upon the Jedi Knight made her cheeks turn rosy.

Up until now, Obi-Wan always assumed Anakin's admiration of Padme was unrequited but now he wasn't so sure — now that he was looking at the senator who seemed to embody the same rush of emotions — desire, fear, anxiety, temptation.

There was a hesitance between them — wanting to leap forward and embrace each other, and forget that they had company.

And what worried Obi-Wan is that it was clear from their ardent gaze, which lasted a beat too long, that this wasn't merely a passing attraction, an anecdotal feeling, but an explored passion.

Their lustful and obsessive glances were not those of a crush... but a lover.

Finally getting their long-awaited vacation on Naboo, Anakin stood in the gardens by the lake retreat, trying to meditate.

Padme snuck up behind him, wrapping her arms around his waist, she could feel his body was tense, like his mind was elsewhere. He closed his eyes, finding peace in the softness of her touch.

She nuzzled into his back in between his shoulder blades, which was as high as she could reach, squeezing him tightly from behind.

"My love," She let out a warm sigh, "Let it all go." He placed his hand over hers that rested on his stomach, and a faint smile formed on his lips.

"For the next two days, there is only us." She soothed. "Shut everything else out. Be here with me."

He turned to face her, wrapping his arm around her.

"I'm here." He promised, bending down to kiss the top of her head.

As they stood there, overlooking the beautiful lake, in each other's arms, she rested her head on his chest.

"I wish we could stay like this forever." She breathed out.

He pondered on that for a moment before looking down at her. Her eyes now meeting his as she smiled up at him. Her warmth radiating from her smile, allowing him to melt all his fears away.

He rubbed her arm. "We will... one day."

*You've got the most unbelievable blue eyes I've ever seen
You've got me almost melting away
As we lay there under a blue sky with pure white stars
Exotic sweetness, a magical time
Say it, say it again*

Lying naked on the carpet in the living room after their shower, Anakin and Padme relished the peaceful silence and privacy of the lake retreat.

Anakin, lying on his back, turned to face his wife, who shuffled over to him, laying on her side. Her seductive eyes lavishing him with her affection.

His knuckles grazed her arm, his bright blue eyes smiling at her. Admiring her petite frame with a curl of his lips, it felt like time and space were a myth. Looking at her now, she was a poem that basically wrote itself. The way her chestnut coils toppled down her back, her lush, graceful skin smooth to the touch, her sultry lips always drawing him in, her scent surrounding him as he yearned to bathe in it — he was forever stained with her. He could lay here and worship her for the rest of his life, the way a musician forever chains himself to that one guitar because nothing feels or sounds as good without it.

“You are so beautiful.” He drawled, making her blush — now turning on his side to face her too.

His fingers traveled her body, brushing against her waist down to her hips. Her glistening eyes not leaving his as goosebumps popped up on her skin wherever his fingertips touched and left.

She bit her lip as his hand continued down to her bottom, caressing the curves of her butt cheek before slipping under her leg, tracing circles on her inner thigh.

His eyes stared into hers with vivid passion, making her quiver with excitement as she sucked in a nervous breath.

“You always make me feel like that.” She breathed out coyly. “Like I’m seen. . .Really seen.”

She had spent so long hiding her vulnerability yet with him she felt exposed in a way she never was with anyone else, and it wasn’t so scary.

His love made her vulnerable but his passion made it worth it — it felt safe being unsafe together. They had fallen so deep into this hole they’ve dug up in secret, giving all of themselves to it. It seemed almost impossible to crawl out of the hole separately now. He was right — she’s in him and he’s in her. Perhaps you should never rely on another person to fill your soul but if he ever left, hers would be an open wound.

“I see you.” He stated emphatically, “You’re the most beautiful woman.”

Her hands reached for him, crawling up his bare chest. Her fingers walking their way up to his alluring mouth. Brushing her thumb against his bottom lip, she let out a satisfying hum as she gazed at him with gratitude — making him feel just as vulnerable in the most riveting way.

“When I’m with you... I’m not afraid.” He continued. His hand making its way up to her breast, his thumb stroking across her nipple. His eyes darted from her chest and back up to meet her soft gaze. “I’m not... unhappy to be alive, and most of my life I couldn’t say that.”

As his hand moved up to her neck, trailing along it, her fingers now twirled the ends of his hair. The way his dark blonde fringe fell across his forehead made her weak — it should be a painting with how it took her breath away.

“You changed everything.” He added with a sincere whisper.

She almost gasped as her heart pounded in her chest, taken aback by his words. She now pressed her body against his with her hand resting on his back, pulling him towards her.

“You” She began, “...are still the most handsome, exciting... *craziest* man I’ve ever met.” She chuckled. She took a moment to see him, really see and admire him before uttering: “... And I have no regrets.”

A cheeky yet heartfelt grin escaped his lips as she beamed up at him. His thumb brushed against her lips, entering her mouth for a quick second to feel her tongue before he tipped her chin up with said thumb. He pressed his lips against hers. Engulfing her in the kiss, his hand now in her hair, letting his fingers roam about her curls.

That same hand now clasped the back of her head, holding her in place as his domineering tongue took over her mouth.

As their lips broke apart, he leaned up, propping himself on his elbow.

“So what do you say...” He suggested “—we move here, spend the rest of our lives sunbathing in the gardens, swimming in the lake...”

“Starting a family...?” She proposed with a coquettish grin.

“Oh well,” He sighed with his typical brand of nonchalance, wrapping his arm around her as his body jumped on top, hovering over her. “I’m ready.”

(Mature)

With a devilish smirk, he now fully slumped his body over hers, his hips pressed against hers, and his hardened budge digging into her pelvis. Her eyes devoted to exploring him, tormented by the possessing look he gave her — raptured by his virile chest, his defined arms, his mussed hair. Her fingers spread across the muscular back of her husband looking like a Greek God.

“Oh yeah?” She chuckled, observing him. “You’re really serious about this... You want to be a dad?”

“Babe, I’ll get you pregnant right now.” His hungry eyes lowered to her mouth. His teeth then bit her earlobe before leaving a trail of kisses on her jawline.

Finally he plastered his mouth on hers, smirking against her parted lips. She opened her mouth wider, giving way for him to slip in his tongue. He released her mouth, keeping his eyes on hers as the tip of his organ stroked her sex, feeling her wet and ready for him.

Her hands gripped onto his hips, pulling him in with a determined look in her eye.

He took his place inside her. Supporting his torso with his arms as he held himself up, he began pumping into her. With slow, intense thrusts, his gaze wouldn't leave hers until his mouth found hers again.

His ragged breath staining her lips, he grunted out "You're mine."

Breathing into her mouth with another desperate kiss made them both feel woozy — their wet lips were chained to one another. The sensation of being inside her was nothing short of euphoric.

"Say you're mine." He whispered with a soft growl that took ownership of her.

"I'm yours." She sang, and once again succumbed to his kiss.

Little did they know at the time that this was the moment they were in fact conceiving a child.

Those days of warm rains come rushing back to me

Miles of windless summer night air

Secret moments shared in the heat of the afternoon

Out of the stillness, soft spoken words

Say it, say it again

Obi-Wan still consumed with thoughts of what he had witnessed a day earlier. He wondered if he should inform the Jedi council. On second thought, he couldn't do that to his brother.

He then contemplated talking to Anakin, warning him of what his attachment would bring. Hoping he wasn't too far gone.

He then remembered his own passionate pull towards Satine, and how they once shared a fondness for one another, imagining what would've been if they could indulge in their hearts' desires.

Remembering their moments of temptation with both a smile and cringe, he realized that maybe Anakin needed to get this out of his system. Perhaps he would gain wisdom through the experience. After all, the bond he shared with Satine made them better people in their own right, and they learned to love from afar, which was perhaps the most selfless way to love.

This might even be good for Anakin to separate love from possession.

Say you'll love, love me forever
Never stop, never, whatever

*Near and far and always
And everywhere and everything*

I love you always, forever

Near and far, closer together

Everywhere, I will be with you

Everything, I will do for you

Donna Lewis — I love you always, forever

24. Barely Holding On

AN:

DS2010: Yup, a bit late Obi-Wan :D

Barely Holding On

*I am here still waiting though I still have my doubts
I am damaged at best, like you've already figured out*

*You got inside my head
I tried my best to be guarded, I'm an open book instead
And I still see your reflection inside of my eyes
That are lookin' for purpose, they're still lookin' for life*

*I'm fallin' apart, I'm barely breathing
With a broken heart that's still beating
In the pain, there is healing
In your name, I find meaning*

Vader paced around his fortress still processing the news of his long lost son. He was still fighting it — fighting to resist any connection to Anakin Skywalker but hearing the boy's name pulled at his heartstrings.

The child survived and was kept hidden from him. And as much as he tried to act like nothing related to Anakin could possibly affect him, he was burdened by the conflict he felt about the life he lived now and the life he left behind.

She named the baby Luke...

Because that's what he wanted.

Anakin was sent to deal with the Outer Rim sieges, and for the past couple of weeks, Padme couldn't get a hold of him. Although he promised he'd find a way to contact her.

She was in no mood to be dragged out anywhere but one of her old friends, Vera, insisted she join her for drinks.

Padme made her way to the bar with as much energy as she could muster — she hadn't been feeling like herself lately.

“There you are!” Vera greeted once Padme made her way to the table. “I was worried you were gonna back out!”

“No, no. I’m here.” Padme plopped herself on the bar stool, catching her breath from the walk.

Vera signaled to the waiter to bring them a round of drinks.

“Just water for me, please.” Padme interjected. “I’ve been feeling... off.”

“What? Come on, I haven’t seen you in ages.” Vera whined. She observed her friend’s worn-out demeanor. “What is it? Something you ate?”

“Hardly.” Padme groaned breathlessly. “I haven’t been able to keep anything down all day.”

Vera shot her a sympathetic smile as she squeezed her hand, appreciating that Padme still came.

“Alright.” Vera chirped after ordering their drinks. “So tell me, what’s going on with you?”

“Not much. Just work.”

Vera couldn’t help but chuckle. “You haven’t changed a bit! It’s all work and no play with you. I’m worried you’re turning into some sort of recluse!”

Padme offered a faint smile. “What can I say, it’s Coruscant! It’s all war and politics here.”

“Coruscant is plagued by workaholics. That’s why I left.” Vera grinned before taking a sip of her drink once the waiter brought it.

Most of Padme’s friends left Coruscant at the start of the war, moving to quieter systems where they could raise their families. Padme always felt that Coruscant was the safest place due to it being the home of the Jedi Temple. But the more she thought about it, the more she realized the busy, hectic streets weren’t exactly where she’d want her kids to grow up. That was another somber thought. All her friends had families, and she could barely get a hold of her secret husband.

“Oh, there he is!” Vera sat up straight once she spotted the man walking towards them. He wrapped his arm around her, planting a small, sweet kiss on her lips. Vera then turned to Padme. ‘Padme, there’s someone I want you to meet.’ She beamed as she placed her hand on the man’s chest. “This is Quinn, my fiancé.”

“Fiance?” Padme gaped. “That’s great! Nice to meet you.” She held out her hand and shook his.

After the quick meet and greet, Quinn announced to his fiancé that he’d go get himself a drink, leaving the girls to chat.

A bubbly Vera turned back to face Padme.

“What about you? Dating anyone?”

“Oh, I don’t have time for that!” Padme dismissed with a flail of her hand.

Vera rolled her eyes, leaning forward to rest her elbows on the high table.

“See, that — it’s that line of thinking...” She huffed. “—you’re never gonna meet someone if you don’t give anyone a chance.” Vera glanced around and noticed a tall, dark, handsome stranger shooting glances at Padme from across the room. ‘Like there!’ Vera smirked. “An opportunity to... open up?” She gestured over to the guy.

Padme took a quick glance and turned back to her friend — a haunted look etched on her face.

“Vera, don’t.” Padme warned. A pained expression painted on her eyes as the man began to make his way over to them.

Vera shrugged giddily, “I’ll give you two a minute.”

Padme was seething at her friend who trotted off.

She heard the man’s voice utter, “Hi,”

“Hi,” She sighed, turning back to face him with a poor attempt at hiding her lack of enthusiasm.

“I uh — I’m not usually this forward but — you are... stunning!” He admitted, bug-eyed.

Padme offered him a weak smile. “What is your name?”

“Del.” He grinned.

“Del...” She breathed. “—Look, I’m sure you’re a really nice guy. And I know it takes a lot to walk across a room and talk to a stranger but — I’m sorry. You’d be wasting your time.”

Del hid his disappointment well, maintaining a warm smile.

“That’s okay... enjoy your night!” He waved before walking off.

“You too.” She muttered.

Vera made her way back to Padme. It was obvious she was experiencing a bit of a buzz.

“Scared him off already?” She teased, leaning on the table.

“Vera, I told you, don’t do that.” Padme looked down, shaking her head slightly.

“Alright, suit yourself!” She sighed before catching her fiance calling her over. “We’re gonna go dance! Wanna join us?”

“No, I’m... good.” Padme put on a good face, but she was ready to go home.

Padme watched Vera and Quinn dance together, young and in love. She smiled as she heard her friend’s laughter, grinning like a cheshire cat in her fiance’s arms as he dipped her. Her smile soon faded, getting lost in her thoughts — missing Anakin, and wondering what it would be like to have that too. To bring him along to all her friend outings, to all the double date nights, and to dance among the crowd together.

As Padme made her way home, she struggled once she got through the door. Her body felt weaker as she dragged her legs, her head felt heavy.

C3PO greeted her, asking her what's wrong but before she could get a word out, she was hit with a wave of nausea.

She raced over to the bathroom, dropping to her knees beside the toilet, and threw up.

Leaning back against the sink, she glanced at the comlink on the floor that fell out of her pocket.

She reached for it, calling Anakin. But there was no answer.

Vader squirmed in his sleep, his head shaking, immersed in a dream. He realized he had had this dream before.

Walking down a pier that led to the water, which then turned into Padme's lake retreat. He hadn't had this dream since he was Anakin.

This time, however, there were no familiar faces on either side. He was alone until he reached the edge — symbolic of the fact that while Anakin had a lot of people in his life, Vader had no one.

With his hands on the railing, he saw his mother floating ahead — and once again she uttered the same words. Her final words before she died.

As Shmi began to lower into the water, she turned into Padme — just as she did the last time he had this dream.

"You can't stop the change." Padme repeated. But this time she too morphed into someone else.

Luke Skywalker.

He saw his son drop down into the water, the same way he allowed himself to fall to his (almost) death earlier that day, once Vader revealed that he was his son.

He looked into his eyes, and saw the same fear reflected — the fear Luke displayed when Vader said those words. *I am your father.*

Vader woke up in a fright, still tied to his machines holding him up. His ragged breaths amplified by his device.

He shuddered, realizing that his son would rather die than join him.

*I'm hanging on to another day
Just to see what you will throw my way
And I'm hanging on to the words you say*

*Left me here alone
I may have lost my way now
Haven't forgotten my way home*

*So I'm holding on, I'm still holdin'
I'm holding on, I'm still holdin'
I'm holding on, I'm still holdin'
I'm barely holding on to you*

25. Words Can Heal

AN:

I've had some free time this week, so again I've managed to upload 2 chapters today!
Xo

Words Can Heal

*Just a day, just an, ordinary day
Just tryin' to get by
Just a boy, just an, ordinary boy but
He was looking to the sky and
As he asked if I would come along
I started to realize that everyday he finds just what he's lookin' for
Like a shooting star he shines, and he said*

*Please come with me, see what I see
Touch the stars for time will not flee
Time will not flee, can't you see*

Vader sensed Luke on the shuttle approaching. The Emperor had foreseen that Luke would surrender, but Vader was still conflicted.

He struggled to reconcile his feelings within, and his thoughts were becoming unbearable. Funnily enough, Anakin used to be tormented by the monster his his head, even hallucinating it at times. And now Vader, the actual monster, was now tormented by Anakin.

The thoughts in his head had now appeared in the form of Anakin Skywalker. Like a ghost, he stood before him, leaning against the wall.

"He's my son." Anakin spoke

"Don't get all sentimental." Vader scoffed — he was so used to these hallucinations, he wasn't even surprised by their visit.

"Hey, tell yourself that." Anakin sneered "You're the one who pulled me out here."

"Forgot how chatty you were." Vader grumbled, sarcastically. "I won't make that mistake again."

“Speaking of mistakes. Don’t do it.” Anakin insisted as Vader turned away from him.

“Do what?” Vader groaned — no longer wanting to engage with him.

“What you’re about to. You know he’s on his way. . .You can’t turn him in.” Anakin warned, shaking his head slightly. “You know you can’t.”

“He can join me.” Vader walked off, wanting to end the interaction that he knew was in his head.

“And kill the emperor?” Anakin followed him. “You want him to suffer my fate...? Lean in to the dark, knowing he’ll never come back from this.”

“It’s his destiny.” Vader spat, struggling to hide his frustration.

“Is it his destiny to repeat your mistakes? Settle for *this*.” Anakin was now in his face. “Is that really what you want? Is that what his mother would want?”

“Just shut up!” Vader bellowed, clenching his fists, turning away from him in a fit of rage, “Shut. Up.”

“I get it.” Anakin said after a beat, leaning back, his elbows resting on the railing. “It’s hard for me, too. I can’t help it either — when I look at him, I see her.”

“So...” Vader began as Luke stood before him. “You’ve accepted the truth.”

“I’ve accepted that you were once Anakin Skywalker, my father.” Luke answered defiantly. And for a moment, his defiance reminded Vader of someone else.

“That name no longer has any meaning for me!” He snapped.

“It is the name of your true self, you’ve only forgotten.” Luke assured

“Obi-Wan once thought as you do.” Vader let the words slip out of his mouth, surprising himself that the memory even crossed his mind. This only made him more afraid with how undone he had become.

“Come with me...” Luke urged, “I know Anakin is in there.”

Luke’s face morphed into Padme’s for a split-second — so quick Vader barely noticed it.

He tensed up, letting a slow, haunting breath leave his chest. “He’s gone!” He spat.

Luke didn’t fear the man in the mask towering over him, though. Instead, he stood up straight and a curl appeared at the end of his lips.

“No, he hasn’t.” He replied slyly. “Or we wouldn’t still be here talking.”

Vader’s mechanical breathing sped up.

“Take him away!” Vader ordered the guards.

Vader stormed off to find some alone time.

“Nice going,” Anakin snickered, leaning against the wall, making Vader jump. The last thing he needed now was his mind to play tricks on him.

“You’re still here?” Vader groaned out.

“He seems to believe you can come back.” Anakin folded his arms.

“He’s naive.” Vader drawled, his face taut under the mask.

“You’re pathetic.” Anakin taunted, annoyed by Vader’s denial.

Vader now turned to face him, his rage pounding in his chest.

“You don’t think I’ve heard those words?!” Vader roared “I’ve heard it all before! Obi-Wan said it, Ahsoka said it...”

“Yeah, yeah that’s true. . .” Anakin sighed nonchalantly before shooting him a piercing stare. “But this time... you really *heard* it.”

Vader stood there frozen unable to look at his former face.

“Because you knew...” Anakin continued. “It wasn’t just coming from Luke....it was coming from Padme.”

In a burst of anger, Vader charged over to the ghost-like Anakin, glaring at him. “Don’t say her name!” He roared. “Don’t you dare say her name to me!”

Anakin disappeared like a puff of smoke, and Vader was left, standing there alone, screaming at himself.

Vader watched as the guards returned Luke to him in chains.

Just as Luke was about to be sent off to the Emperor, Vader stopped the guards.

He turned to his son, who looked up at him.

A moment had passed and Vader still hadn’t said anything — it was clear to Luke that his father was grabbling with his conflict.

“I feel the conflict within you.” Luke spoke for him. “I feel the good in you.”

“It’s too late for me, son.”

“We’ll see...” Luke noted as the guards dragged him off.

*And as he spoke, he spoke, ordinary words
Though they did not feel
For I felt what I had not felt before
And you’d swear those words could heal and
As I looked up into those eyes, his vision borrows mine
And I know he’s no stranger
For I feel I’ve held him for all of time, and he said*

*Take my hand, live while you can
Don't you see your dreams lie right in the palm of your hand*

26. Someone Like Me

AN: Mercenary29: Thanks! I'm trying :D Really I'm just dying to get this story out of me haha! xo

Someone Like Me

*Don't let your head rule you heart
Don't let your world be torn apart
Don't keep it all to yourself
Just let all your emotions run free with someone like me
That's the way it should be
Someone like me*

I am Padme Amidala...

Just saying that makes me feel like a stranger... because, well, that's how I feel most of the time. Someone like me, in politics, knows of the dangers that lurk, especially when you're challenging the senate. I put myself in the public eye, I knew the risks but my family shouldn't have to deal with the consequences. So I changed my name to keep them safe, and now my own name is foreign to me.

And now I'm married and pregnant, and I'd love to be able to take my husband's name, share it with our child — the name which unifies us as a family.

I still haven't told Anakin. We haven't been able to reach each other. Maybe it's for the best — I mean, I'd much rather be face to face when I deliver the news. Plus, I know how worried he gets about me when he's away. This would only be a distraction, and I want him focused out there, I want him safe, and, most importantly, I want him home in one piece.

But who am I kidding? That's not the only reason I haven't said anything. It's a big part of it but I'm also just terrified. What if it's too much for him? He's already under immense pressure. Sure, he talks about having a family and jokes about getting me pregnant but what if he isn't ready? He's barely 22 years old, and he's spent most of his adult life on the front lines of the war. I honestly can't predict how he'd react.

I know he loves me more than anything, and perhaps these doubts are just in my head, but I've been struggling to be happy about the news. I have always thought about this. I've always wanted to be a mother even before I knew I'd ever settle down and have a family — I just knew I love to nurture and care for people. I know Anakin certainly loves my motherly qualities, and it seems like the right step for a married couple that's madly in love. I'm also

sure if he weren't a Jedi, we wouldn't be worrying about having a baby at all. It would be a dream come true.

*But the fact is, he **is** a Jedi. And there lies the problem. Am I going to feel like a single mother? He's already not around for the first 3 months of this pregnancy. Will he be around to raise them? Will our marriage be harder to hide with children involved? There's no way we can avoid getting caught once they go to school. Plus, they'd be force sensitive — would that stir up questions about who the father is? It just seems like it would be impossible to cover up.*

...I can't dwell on this anymore. I just keep pushing all these fears to the side every morning when I step foot in the senate building. They're already starting to grow suspicious. I don't know how long I can keep pretending I've fallen ill with how many times I run to the bathroom.

Today, though, was different. For the first time, I didn't feel like a stranger.

***She** made me feel like there was someone around me that I didn't have to completely lie to. Like I actually could just look someone in the eye and say I'm scared or I'm excited.*

And it all began when she turned around and said...

"Congratulations." Mon Mothma whispered over to her as they sat in one of the pods.

"What?" Padme gasped as Mon's eyes darted from her stomach back to her eyes. "Oh no, I'm not—"

Padme dismissed the claim with a flail of her hand. "Just can't seem to shake this bug."

"Alright." Mon shot her a polite nod, smirking to herself.

Mon glanced down at the senator who was giving a speech before glancing back at Padme.

"You know, you won't be able to hide it forever."

"I'm not—" Padme interjected but couldn't bring herself to finish the sentence. She lowered her head, and Mon could see she was struggling bottling everything up.

"If I may say so, I don't think you should." She soothed. "Nothing to be ashamed of."

Padme was quiet but inside she felt a sense of relief. No one, not even her parents knew about this baby. She hadn't had one person congratulate her until now — not even a word of encouragement that she could do this. Mon Mothma's words were the only uplifting thing she had heard since she found out she was pregnant.

"But if you must—" Mon continued with a shrug. "... darker colours."

"What?" Padme finally looked up at her.

"Wear darker colours. Black is always slimming." She winked.

Mon offered her a warm smile before getting up to head off.

"Mon!" Padme called after her, making her turn back around. Once their eyes met, Padme's face softened. "Thanks."

All this time she had considered her accidental pregnancy a mistake, and she was sure everyone on the senate would agree. But in this moment, Mon allowed her to feel whatever she wanted to feel. She could be excited about it, and she didn't have to care what they thought.

Mon Mothma walked off, and behind her stood Palpatine.

His dark, malevolent eyes glowered at his fellow Naboolian.

*I know it's hard when you're feeling down
To lift your feet up off the ground
We make mistakes but doesn't everybody
You don't always have to agree with someone like me
That's the way it should be
Someone like me*

I am Anakin Skywalker... I'm the guy who does everything right, or everything wrong... depending on who you ask.

I'm just tired of the lies. The ones I've told. The ones I've been told — specifically by the council. I've lost a lot in this war, I don't have enough fingers to count them all.

*3 months in the Outer Rim, shacking up with my troops, risking our lives every single day, and I don't get a moment to myself to grieve, recharge, or talk to **her**.*

I try not to think about her. I do my best to leave all my personal feelings at the door. But, of course, this is easier said than done. My mind is filled with shoulda, woulda, couldas... and when things are out of my control, I feel like a failure.

That's also how I felt about my Padawan. I lost a sister to me. If only I protected her better, I thought. If I had been there with her, found out the truth sooner, proved her innocence sooner, would she still have walked away?

It felt like she was walking away from me when she left the order. Even when I knew this one was on the Jedi council — not me — I couldn't help but take it personally. This was yet another thing I couldn't forgive them for. It seemed that everything that went wrong for me, happened at the hands of the Jedi.

Who knows if we'll ever agree on anything... they cast me in the villainous role, and I cast them. Maybe we're both wrong and both right — even if I don't see it that way. One thing is for sure, we love keeping tabs on each other.

All I know is we're on thin ice. The final straw for me would involve Padme. My beautiful wife who fought for Ahsoka, fought for all of us, and made us all a family.

If they mess things up for us, I'd be done.

To be fair, I feel done now as I finally get a moment to myself, hiding in one of the barracks, trying to gather my thoughts before Obi-Wan finds me and puts me to work.

I'm a man who's tired of disappointment, tired of being angry, tired of being surrounded by loss. I'm just... tired.

But that's the thing. Someone like me can't be tired. The fearless hero could never admit that I can't take it.

So I yearn for more power.

"General Skywalker," Rex joined Anakin inside one of the barracks.

"Yeah?" Anakin looked up from his seat, it was obvious he had been lost in his own thoughts.

"Are you alright?" Rex took a seat on the bench opposite him.

"Uh -yeah." Anakin gave a wishy-washy reply, as Rex looked into his absent eyes.

"With all due respect, sir. I think it's a bit late to start lying to me." He argued but Anakin was silent.

Anakin remained evasive about his feelings.

As Rex observed him, his face woeful, knowing he could never really understand what was going on in that head of his.

Rex sighed to himself. "...I never got the chance to tell you, I'm sorry about Ahsoka."

Anakin refused to look up. A bleak expression painted across his face, his unkempt hair and hopeless eyes now burning a hole in the ground.

"Me too." He finally murmured.

"She might come back," Rex suggested, his tone as buoyant as possible.

Anakin almost scoffed as he shook his head. A silent pause followed his dreary voice. "She won't."

Rex looked down, realizing how tied they all were to each other. Not the family they were born into but the family they chose. In some ways, losing a family member you chose was harder, given that they didn't have enough of one in the first place.

Rex looked back up, "About the senator... I won't pry into your personal affairs again. I hope I haven't overstepped my boundaries with you, sir. I just... -well, most people treat someone like me as just another clone but you treat me as... a friend. And I wanted to be one back."

Anakin's eyes remained on the ground. There was no indication that he was even listening to Rex. But he was touched. He just couldn't bring himself to say anything in this moment.

Rex observed him, realizing Anakin was in no mood to discuss any of it. "...Anyway, I'll . . . leave you to it."

He made his way to the door, allowing Anakin to take the time he needed to be alone.

But Anakin finally spoke.

“...she’s my wife.” He rasped.

Rex turned back to face him once more. Anakin’s eyes finally left the ground and settled on the wooden table in front of him.

“As a Jedi, well, you know...” He paused, scraping and picking at the wooden flakes. “—we shouldn’t have attachments.”

Rex was quiet, realizing exactly why Anakin was so guarded all the time.

“But yeah,” He sighed, releasing a heavy exhale as if he had been waiting to let it out. “Padme is my wife.”

Anakin faintly chuckled to himself as he heard his own voice. He clicked his tongue, “I’ve never said those words before.”

Rex didn’t want to make a big deal out of Anakin confiding in him but he did appreciate the level of trust they shared.

“You must miss her.” Rex sympathized.

Anakin finally spared the wooden table and gave himself a chance to feel his own emotions.

“More than she knows.” He pictured her beautiful face. Her delicate features were more familiar in his dreams than reality with how long it had been since he’d seen her. The sound of her voice was far more vivid when he closed his eyes. He had spent so long trying not to think about her while he was awake.

“Then let her know.” Rex insisted.

Anakin finally looked up at him and for the first time since they’d been here, Anakin smiled.

*We know the story so far
Know what you want and who you are
Let all your emotions run free
You don’t always have to agree
With someone like me*

Someone Like Me — Atomic Kitten

27. Far Away

AN: Thank you so much for the reviews. So sorry this update is a little late — been swamped this week. But looks like I'll be more free from now on :D xo

Far Away

*This time, this place
Misused, mistakes
Too long, too late
Who was I to make you wait?
Just one chance, just one breath
Just in case there's just one left*

"Chancellor." Palpatine's guard headed into his office.

"Yes?" He replied, looking up from his desk.

"The Naboo royal guard reported back."

"And?" Palpatine leaned forward, listening intently.

"You were right. The senator traveled to the Naboo palace about 4 months ago. And not alone... The Jedi was with her."

"Hmm." A sinister grin formed on his face. "Could the guard specify whether this visit was for business or . . . pleasure?"

"He claims it was the latter."

"For certain?" Palpatine finally got up from his desk, and began circling around his office.

"Oh he's certain." The guard nodded adamantly. "He's located not far from the senator's . . . bedroom."

Palpatine couldn't hide his mischievous smirk.

He finally stopped in his tracks to face the guard. "Anything else?"

"Yes — just that their visits have been quite frequent over the past couple of years."

Palpatine slowly nodded, acknowledging the information. "That'll be all. Thank you."

*Cause you know, I wanted, I wanted you to stay
'Cause I needed, I need to hear you say*

*That I love you, I have loved you all along
And I forgive you, for being away, for far too long*

*So keep breathing, 'cause I'm not leaving you anymore
Believe it, hold on to me and never let me go*

Anakin placed his holoprojector on the ground. Once Padme appeared, he greeted her with a soothing, “Hey,”

“Hey handsome!” She beamed up at him, delighted that he finally made contact. “I’ve missed you so much!”

“I miss you too.” He admitted warmly.

“Tell me you’re coming home.” She urged

“I wish I could.” He sighed. “Things are taking a little longer than I expected.” His eyes met hers, taking a soulful moment to admire what they both longed for — each other.

“How’s it going over there?” He eventually spoke.

“Well, I’m working from home at the moment — Jar Jar’s representing me at the senate.”

“How come?” He asked.

“I just. . .needed some space — away from politics, policies.” She groaned. “I just needed a break.” She wanted to nest and feel like she had some control over her environment.

He nodded. “Well, that’s good.”

“Yeah. And it means I’ll be more available for your calls. If you do actually start calling me.” She mocked.

He let out a chuckle. “Whenever I get a chance.” He assured.

Her sassy glare and petulance quickly faded as she couldn’t help but smile once she heard him laugh.

After sharing a laugh, he studied her. “So you’re okay?” He summed up.

“Yeah, I’m... good actually.” She uttered confidently. Excited about the baby, and she couldn’t wait until he was home to share the news.

“You do look good.” He agreed with a wink. A wink that entranced her.

“I wish you were here so badly.” Letting out a heavy exhale, she gazed up at him.

“Me too.” He shook his head, hopelessly. “You have no idea.” Both yearning to be together, craving each other’s touch.

Their wistful moment was interrupted by Rex banging on the door at the sight of Obi-Wan heading his way.

“Ugh. That’s Rex. I have to go.” Anakin rubbed his forehead. “I’m worried about him. He’s been allowing himself to be led by his emotions on this mission.”

“Sounds familiar.” She teased.

He let out a half smirk, rolling his eyes.

“I’m not saying it’s a bad thing.” She interjected. “Sometimes your instincts are the best compass.”

Anakin paused, taking her words in. “...I just don’t want him to get his hopes up.”

“Even if he does, he’ll be okay.” She assured. “He has you. No one cares about their soldiers like you.”

He could feel her warmth through her smile even though she was far away. She instantly made him feel better. She saw the best in him even when he couldn’t see it himself.

“Thanks babe.” He eventually replied. She could tell she had truly touched him from the grateful tone in his voice.

After a tender moment, his leering eyes locked with hers. “You don’t wanna. . .flash me a little something — before I go?”

“No.” She shook her head — nonchalantly shrugging. She did her best to hide her body changes from him with a loose blouse. “I figure deprivation will push you to come home sooner.” She shot him a coquettish grin.

Rex banged on the door again. This time, a little louder.

“You’re probably right.” Anakin quickly answered as he glanced at the door. “I need all my aggression.” He joked — hoping it would come in handy to end the sieges as quickly as possible.

She chuckled in response.

“I love you, Ani.” She cooed after a beat.

He let out a satisfied sigh. “I love you too.”

“Here you go! All fixed!” Anakin tossed Rex his helmet.

“What’s going on?” Obi-Wan observed them closely. Rex’s wide-eyed expression was a giveaway.

“Nothing.” Anakin shrugged. “Come on, Rex. We better get going.”

As they started heading off, Obi-Wan watched them, folding his arms. “How’s Padme?” He blurted out.

Anakin paused before turning around and did his best to earnestly reply with an “I don’t know.”

Obi-wan clicked his tongue. His gaze steadfast on Anakin. “Well, when you find out, say hello from me.” He huffed before walking off.

“He knows.” Rex uttered once Obi-wan was out of earshot.

“He doesn’t know everything.” Anakin grumbled

“This might be a good thing, you know?” Rex continued, trying to keep up with Anakin’s fast pace as they walked away.

“How?” Anakin crinkled his forehead — doubtful.

“You can talk to him about it. He can help.” He instructed and Anakin laughed.

“I love Obi-Wan but... he’d go straight to the council.”

“You don’t know that.” Rex insisted

“I do.” Anakin finally stopped to face him. “Look, it’s not his fault. He’s just. . .a boy scout.” There was an obvious groan as he said those words.

“But you’re like brothers.” Rex seemed puzzled by Anakin’s lack of enthusiasm.

Anakin let out an exasperated sigh, believing this was a hopeless case. “...Brothers tell on each other.”

Anakin and Rex headed over to the aircraft only to find nose art of Padme Amidala plastered on.

A seething Anakin clenched his jaw. “What’s that?!”

“Oh that’s our girl. The Naboo senator. We check her out on the holoscans. She’s up there to remind us what we’re fighting for back home.”

“Yeah! She can negotiate with me anytime!” Wrecker effused.

Rex glanced at Anakin whose blood was boiling. “L-let’s just. . .go.”

Anakin tensed up. Closing his eyes for a second, he huffed, controlling his temper as he breathed out slowly, “They have nose art of my *wife*?”

“It’s — erm... just a form of admiration.” Rex shrugged, treading carefully.

Anakin turned to face him. “That is *not* staying there!” He warned with a scowl.

“W-we’ll get it removed.” Rex hurriedly assured, urging Anakin to get on the aircraft.

*I’d withstand
All of hell to hold your hand*

*I'd give it all, I'd give it for us
Give anything, but I won't give up*

*'Cause you know... that I love you, I have loved you all along
And I miss you. Been far away, for far too long*

I keep dreaming you'll be with me, and you'll never go

I'd stop breathing if I don't see you anymore

28. My Dream – Part I

My Dream

—Part I

*We were strangers, starting out on a journey
Never dreaming, what we'd have to go through
Now here we are, I'm suddenly standing
At the beginning with you*

*No one told me, I was going to find you
Unexpected, what you did to my heart
When I lost hope, you were there to remind me
This is the start*

Here's the thing they don't tell you about war. PTSD doesn't just come from all the unsightly events soldiers had to witness. What normally stays with a warrior long after the war is the unsightly actions they took — ones they never believed they were capable of.

For Anakin, there were a few dark things he did but none occupied a space in his mind like beheading Count Dooku. His desire to take someone's life out of pure, selfish revenge stayed with him, and continued to burden him.

And yet once they arrived on Coruscant (with a not-so-subtle entrance) he was met with tons of praise. Everyone was rewarding him for being their dream hero — never knowing just how many lives he stole.

Anakin spotted Padme from the corner of his eye. He excused himself from his conversation with Bail, and hurried over to her with an adorable run. He couldn't wait to have her in his arms, and forget about the outside world.

Once he caught up with her, his heart melted at the sight of her blissful smile beaming up at him. He grabbed her, lifting her up and spinning her around. She let out a soft, satisfied squeal as she felt his arms around her.

The heavenly scent of her hair intoxicated him. His warm body pressed against hers as he held her up made her putty in his hands.

"Oh I missed you so much!" He whispered breathlessly, putting her back down. Stealing a quick kiss, they could feel their hearts pounding in their chests the minute their lips touched.

Padme did her best to catch her breath as she pulled away. She was relieved that her husband was finally standing before her.

“There were whispers that you’d been killed.” She fretted, holding onto his arms hopelessly.

“I’m alright.” A light chuckle escaped his lips as he gazed at her confidently.

“Don’t ever leave me for that long again.” She warned with an air of desperation.

“I won’t.” He assured with a grin. With his arms wrapped around her, he pulled her in closer to his body. He lowered his head to hers, feeling the heat from her cheeks warming him up — causing him to let out a woozy groan as he inhaled her perfume.

“To tell you the truth, until the Chancellor had been kidnapped, I didn’t think they would’ve ever brought us back from the outer rim sieges.” His ragged breaths blowing on her sultry lips — craving to close the gap between them, and create ecstasy.

A fire was burning up within him, wanting to take possession of her. His hungry eyes yearning to absorb her after 8 long months apart. He forced his lewd mouth onto hers, dying to consume her. But she held him back. His parted lips starving.

She couldn’t take her eyes off of those scorching lips, wanting to be dissolved by the pleasure of his lascivious, lovely kisses. But she had far too much on her mind to completely relinquish control in this moment.

Although aroused by his impulses, Padme did her best to let air pass between them as she leaned back.

“Wait. Not here.” Her voice muffled by his lips hovering over hers. Anakin impatiently waiting for her to give him permission.

“Yes, here.” He grunted out before taking a breath. His eyes firmly on her mouth. “I’m tired of all this deception. I don’t care if they know we’re married. No more secrets.” He leaned in once more, rushing to taste her.

“I’m afraid that won’t be possible.” She whispered, turning her head away.

She began to tremble as his big hands caressed her either side of her waist.

“What is it?” He grew concerned. His eyes now holding hers as his fingers sunk into her lower back.

“I’m...” She paused, letting out a shaky exhale. “—just gonna come right out and say it.”

She took another deep breath and bit her lip, as he studied her. She took his hand and placed it over her stomach.

“Ani, I’m pregnant.” As soon as the words left her mouth, she quivered. She had waited to say those words for 5 months now, and it seemed the longer she waited, the more fearful she was of his response.

Anakin’s movements were stilled. His eyes no longer present as his thoughts circled around in his head.

Fear. Anxiety. Stress.

Fearing whether he was capable of being responsible for another life. Anxious about whether he would do a good job. Could he handle the stress of war and the Jedi, and raise a child at 22 years old?

Then the thoughts shifted...

Joy. Love. Family.

On the other hand, there was the joy of becoming a dad. A baby created out of his love for Padme. Their family expanding.

"Th-that's — that's wonderful." He finally uttered, smiling at her.

"Yeah?" She asked, letting out a sigh of relief.

"How are we gonna hide this one?" She chuckled anxiously.

Looking into his warm eyes, his hands rubbing her back, she could finally relax and enjoy the news herself.

"We don't need to worry about that right now." He soothed, pulling her towards him, knowing no one could take this away from them. "This is our moment."

He embraced her, allowing her to rest her head on his chest as he nuzzled into her neck.

*We were strangers, on a crazy adventure
Never dreaming, how our dreams would come true
Now here we stand, unafraid of the future
At the beginning with you*

Anakin arrived home later that evening, only a couple of hours after Padme. He glanced at her on the balcony. She was looking out at the night sky — filled with stars. She was already in her nightgown.

He gazed at her as he made his way over. Leaning on the doorway, he was mesmerized by that pregnancy glow on her skin. She turned around and caught his gaze. With a radiant smile, she took his breath away. He couldn't believe he was finally home with her. The way she looked at him made him proud to be called her husband. She made him feel forever revered, believed in, lusted after, and safe.

She admired her husband standing there in his dark, Jedi robes. Looking as rugged and handsome as ever. She could now free herself of any worries she had. He knew about the baby, and they were thrilled to go on their next adventure together.

She couldn't wish for a more perfect moment. It didn't matter what was happening out there because right now she was at peace. Her husband was home. And she got to be his wife.

There was no greater honour for her than to be his partner. He gave the word '*Wife*' new meaning. To her, it meant she would forever be wooed, desired, kept safe... all at the hands of Anakin Skywalker.

"Why do you always look so good?" He sighed, folding his arms.

"To torture you." She teased.

"Consider me tortured." He grinned, holding her gaze.

She felt giddy as he looked at her with such intensity. His blue eyes probing into her, stealing her wild heart. Silence surrounded them as they shut off the outside world (and the sounds of all the ships flying by) just to be deluged by the intimacy of lovers.

"Come here." He suggested, seductively.

She obliged, gradually making her way to him. His arms wrapped around her, his hands admiring the feel of her silky nightgown. His eyes scanned her up and down, letting out a satisfied breath.

She rested her arms on his, holding onto him as he made her knees buckle under with every gentle caress of his hand on her back.

His hands slid further down her backside, squeezing her tightly as he pulled her towards him. She could feel his upper body now pressed against hers, as he slumped himself over her. His mouth found hers and refused to part as they frolicked over to the bed.

Mature

"Take me now." She whimpered, relishing in the fire that burned whenever he hovered over her body. "I can't wait any longer." She cried. She had endured the wait for long enough. Her libido was already high for him but was amplified further during her pregnancy.

Holding himself up with his arms on either side of her, he could feel his groin ache for her as he salivated over her.

"Neither can I." He groaned, as his desperate eyes stared at her mouth, tormented by the gap between them.

Resting his heavy forehead on hers, his starving mouth finally took over hers with his tongue.

Her weak moans blocked by his wet lips pressed up against hers. His now urgent kisses plundering her with his tongue. And she was weakened by him groaning in her mouth.

"I want you so bad it turns me into an animal." He whispered with a growl. His aggressive hands now fully worshipping her body before flipping her over. A playful squeal left her lips, loving his uninhibited ardour.

With her on all fours and him knelt up right behind her, his hands caressed her bottom until he took her from behind.

Finally, the ultimate sense of relief as he soaked up her wet essence. She could feel his fingers grip her hips, sliding her deeper onto him as he pleased. A symphony of moans, burning bodies, flesh stained with each other's scent. They were latched onto one another as he ravaged her, refusing to stop until he felt her whole body shudder with him inside her, and their love spilled all over the sheets.

*Knew there was somebody, somewhere
A new love in the dark
Now I know my dream will live on
I've been waiting so long
Nothing's gonna tear us apart*

Anakin lied down on the bed with Padme resting on his chest. Still trying to catch their breath after violent explosions of passion. A series of inhalations were whispered — a sense of longing finally satiated. Her voluptuous thigh wrapped around him as his fingertips traced her smooth skin.

"When the war is over, I'm staying with you." He breathed out.

"What?" She now pulled herself up, resting on her elbow with her other hand on his chest. She observed him, looking into his steady eyes full of determination. "Wait. . .you mean—"

He nodded, answering her thoughts. He raised his hand up to cup her neck before his fingers entwined in her coils.

"What about the order?" Her brow furrowed.

"What about it?" He shrugged. His hand now clasped the back of her head, pulling her down to meet his lips. Stealing a kiss before she lifted her head back up again.

"But..." She pulled back, her soft eyes trying to read him. "It's. . .your dream."

His eyes skimmed hers before landing on her delicate neck where his hand rested — his thumb stroking her cheek.

"You're my dream." He drawled, as his fingers now trailed down to her clavicle before lowering down to rub her stomach. "This is."

She smiled at him, crawling on top of him. She pressed her body on his, and her hand reached up cradle his face. He lifted his head up to devour her mouth once more. His hand found its way back in her hair, and with a heavy exhale, he released her mouth, and gazed into her beautiful brown eyes.

"I don't wanna be away from my family, popping in every month or so." He huffed as he stroked her hair. "I wanna make sure my kid gets the dad I always wanted."

Her heartwarming smile lingered. She didn't have to say anything — her soft eyes let him know that she was in awe of him.

“This is the beginning of the rest of our lives.” He continued. “We’ve waited so long for a fresh start. It’s just me and you now — and our baby.”

She nodded before touching his lips with hers — a light, tender kiss. She then rested her chin on his chest, and a sensual moan left her lips. He lifted his mouth up once more to lightly press his lips against her forehead.

As she rested on top of him, they laid there in serenity. They were magic together. The love they shared electric, whimsy, luminous and full of texture.

It was almost a shame for Anakin to close his eyes, as their love wasn’t enough to protect him from a haunting slumber. For what they believed was the beginning of their story was in fact the beginning of the end.

*Life is a road that I wanna keep going
Love is a river, I wanna keep flowing
Life is a road, now and forever, wonderful journey*

*I’ll be there when the world stops turning
I’ll be there when the storm is through
In the end I wanna be standing
At the beginning...*

With you

29. My Dream – Part II

AN:

DS2010: Thank you for always reviewing :) I appreciate it :D As easy going as Padme is, I don't know if she'd like her image on a ship too much Haha! And yes, we gotta give Anakin and Padme some nice moments before everything goes downhill :DD

Mercenary29: Thank you so much! I really appreciate your comment! XOXO

My Dream

—Part II

*Every whisper of every waking hour
I'm choosing my confessions
Trying to keep an eye on you
Like a hurt, lost, and blinded fool
Oh no, I've said too much
I set it up*

Anakin woke up in a sweat, panting from a dream. He had these kinds of visions before. Although he was told to never dwell on the past or anticipate the future, he knew all too well that his visions were likely true. If Padme was doomed to endure his mother's fate then this time he couldn't sit back and wait for it to happen.

*No familiar surroundings, just one familiar face, and a sight I couldn't ignore
Life is lost and gained within these white walls and on this cold floor
I'm powerless in my dreams as my wife screams
Hovering over her, I try to comfort her as I hear a baby's cry
But before I could caress her tear-stained cheek, she dies*

Padme woke up at the sound of her husband heading out onto the balcony, and proceeded to join him. She noticed his absent eyes overlooking the sky, agonized by whatever occupied his mind.

“You okay?” She asked. Her gentle touch soothed him as she placed her hand on his lower back.

“Yeah.” He turned to face her, wrapping his arm around her. “Go back to bed.” He assured, stroking her arm.

“Come with me.” She requested. Her arms tightly wrapped around his waist as she looked up at him.

“In a bit.” He murmured, looking back out at the sky.

“What is it?” She quizzed. Her imploring eyes fixed on him.

“Nothing.” He did his best to sound as convincing as possible but she knew when he was bottling things up.

“Ani, talk to me.” She urged. Her fingertips tracing his cheek. Her sensuous touch was almost cathartic. “Whatever it is, we’re a little family now. We can handle anything together.” She promised.

Anakin gazed down at her belly, giving it a gentle rub as he smiled.

“It was just one of my dreams.” He finally confessed. He tried to shrug it off, hiding his true feelings about it — not wanting to worry her.

“Had many of those lately?” She asked, rubbing his back.

The more she probed, the weaker his resolve. Looking into her wholesome eyes, he felt guilty for hiding his feelings. Her presence always made him feel so safe and he was actively pushing her away.

“Not like this.” He admitted. His eyes now remained on the floor as the images from his dreams flashed before his eyes.

“What was this one?” Padme’s eyes forced his to meet hers.

His eyes now fearful as they held hers. “This one was. . .about you.” He paused. “You died in childbirth.”

Padme’s lips parted. His words definitely unnerved her but she quickly dismissed any negative thoughts. Refusing to give the dream any credibility or worry her husband, she shrugged it off. “It was only a dream.”

“That’s what I used to say when I had ones about my mother.” Anakin turned to her, woeful and bleak.

Padme’s doleful eyes landed on him. Her wistful heart mourning his pain, understanding why this had such a big impact on him — wanting to protect him and reassure him that his past would never reoccur.

“Anakin, it’s just your fear. It’s not real...” She cradled his chin, urging him to keep her gaze. “I’m right here, and nothing’s gonna happen to me.” She insisted.

Anakin’s eyes softened, appreciating her attempt to dispel his fears. But he knew it wouldn’t be that easy to put his mind at ease.

He pulled her in for a hug. Holding her close, her head buried in his chest as their warm bodies embraced each other. His hand cradled the back of her head, his fingers entangled in her curls, haphazardly messing her hair as he reveled in the feel of her soft strands on his fingertips.

Her delicate eyes glanced up at him. He caught her gaze, and he felt a sense of relief. Her confident smile allowed him to escape into the moment with her — pressing pause on his fears long enough to appreciate being in the comfort of their home.

“You’re just stressed.” She maintained. “This baby *will* change our lives, and we’ll probably have to come clean . . . But when the war is over and we’ve moved to Naboo, you’ll see, there was nothing to worry about.”

He chose to believe her — that this was simply due to his fears of fatherhood. He had to because he couldn’t bear to think that losing her was a possibility.

*Consider this the hint of the century
Consider this the slip
That brought me to my knees, failed
What if all these fantasies come flailing around?
And now, I’ve said too much*

Anakin arrived at Palpatine’s office after receiving his call. After exchanging pleasantries, Palpatine could sense Anakin’s struggle. It was obvious he hadn’t slept, and all his fears, trauma, and stress stained his face.

“What’s troubling you, my friend?” Palpatine observed Anakin.

With his hands buried in his cloak, Anakin’s eyes settled on the floor. “Nothing.” He did his best to shrug off his mood. “I’m fine.”

The Chancellor’s sympathetic gaze caught Anakin’s eyes. “Anakin, I’ve known you since you were a little boy, you don’t need to put on a good front with me.” Palpatine’s soothing voice and fatherly interest in his well-being was comforting to Anakin.

“I’m just tired.” Anakin shot him a faint smile.

“I understand.” Palpatine nodded. His eyes were warm, allowing Anakin to release the tension he felt in his body. “We’re all tired. But I have great confidence that we will soon see an end to this war.”

“I hope so.” He muttered. But the hopelessness and doubt in his voice was not lost on the Chancellor.

Palpatine headed over to Anakin, placing his hand on his back in consolation. He felt more confident than ever that Anakin would lean more towards him if push came to shove between him and the Jedi. After all, after finding out about Anakin and Padme’s relationship from the Naboo Royal Guard, and learning that Anakin is likely the father of her child, he realized

Anakin was even more likely to go against the Jedi than he even thought — he already was defying them with his clandestine affair.

“Anakin, you saved my life.” He began. “If there ever is anything you need, my door is always open.”

Anakin offered a polite and appreciative nod. “Thanks. Your guidance is never taken for granted.”

“I am very proud of you.” Palpatine added. ‘Not just the Jedi you’ve become but the man you’ve grown to be. Who I always knew you could be... You’ve worked so hard to be everything for everybody. You’re a true leader, and everyone has benefited off of your talents.’ He paused letting out a sigh “...Maybe it’s time you put yourself first.”

“That’s. . .not in the job description.” Anakin released a light chuckle. “The Jedi probably find me to be more of a burden than a benefit.”

Anakin tried to pass off his comments as humour but he and the Chancellor both knew his words felt true.

Palpatine shook his head in disappointment. “It saddens me to see the Jedi don’t appreciate you. You’ve won many battles they thought were lost.” He cocked one eyebrow. “If *I* were Master Kenobi, I would be raving about my apprentice’s success, urging them to put you on the council.”

Palpatine knew that last sentence would land. Anakin needed to feel his master was on *his* side. Anakin just didn’t yet know which *master* Palpatine had in mind.

“Well, Obi-Wan’s mentoring style is less positive reinforcement and more. . .tough love.” Anakin again added an air of humour to his words. “As for the council, I don’t care about that. I like to be out in the action, doing something — not just. . .talking about it.”

“That’s what they want. You distracted by the action.” Palpatine’s voice was firmer now, making it clear to Anakin that this conversation was not to be taken lightly. “The council have always been hesitant to challenge their wisdom. . .expand their viewpoints... Honestly, Anakin, I don’t even know why Jedi Masters have a library of knowledge if they’re never going to use it. There’s so much power in knowledge.” He urged in an attempt to unleash Anakin’s ambition.

“Eh. Perhaps they don’t want to abuse that power.” Anakin shrugged. “Force abilities. . .they can be cruel.” Anakin’s eyes lowered back down to the ground. His abilities lead to devastating visions that he felt powerless to stop.

“Force abilities are only cruel if you can’t control them.” Palpatine replied, and Anakin’s eyes rose — now curious as to what insight the Chancellor could give him about gaining *control*.

“The force is a gift, Anakin.” Palpatine continued. “And you use it better than most . . . Why shouldn’t you take advantage and do more with it? Think of all the people you can help. How many more lives you’d save...”

It was almost as if the Chancellor could sense Anakin’s deepest desires. Maybe he *would* understand if Anakin confided him in — He might even understand better than the Jedi ever

could.

Anakin paused for a moment. Perhaps the Chancellor was right. He couldn't deny he sometimes felt excluded from the Jedi. And Obi-Wan rarely took his side lately. At first he thought it was his own fault. That his behaviour made them feel they couldn't depend on him. But after hearing Palpatine's words, he wondered if maybe there was more to it.

Anakin shot the Chancellor an agreeable nod, about to head off but Palpatine called after him. "Anakin, wait . . . I have some news."

Anakin eyed Palpatine, interested in what the wise man had to offer. He even felt optimistic once he saw the Chancellor smiling.

Maybe there was more to life and the force than what the Jedi told him. Maybe the Jedi don't deserve his unwavering faith, he thought. After all, he believed he had collected plenty of reasons to doubt them.

The Jedi were beginning to feel the same way about Anakin. His fear and lust for power made them reconsider leaving their fate in his hands.

*Oh, life is bigger than you, and you are not me
The lengths that I will go to
The distance in your eyes
Oh no, I've said too much
I set it up*

*Once again I am haunted by the cold white room
Powerless to prevent my wife's impending doom
I reach out again determined to save her this time
Only to find the hand that comforts her isn't mine*

Anakin was tense as he woke up at the Jedi temple. He was furious at how the dream unfolded with Obi-Wan at Padme's bedside.

Obi-Wan.

He couldn't fathom any reason why his master would be there instead of him. Did Obi-Wan know something? It's not like Padme talked to him much. And communication between him and his mentor was scarce these days. Sometimes he wished he could talk to Obi-Wan the way he could talk to Palpatine — though it seemed his bond with his master was frayed.

Perhaps he could lean on the Chancellor instead, and finally have someone to share this emotional weight.

There seemed to be a lot of going on within the Jedi and Anakin was always kept out of the loop. Yet at the same time, he always felt all eyes were on him — waiting for him to fail.

*That's me in the corner
That's me in the spotlight
Losing my religion
Trying to keep up with you
And I don't know if I can do it
Oh no, I've said too much
I haven't said enough*

Anakin did his best to push aside his fears for now.

He tried confiding in Yoda but Yoda's generalized advice didn't do much for him. It seemed every conversation he had with him lately resulted in the Master encouraging him to be less indulgent and let go of his desire to control everything.

Now he wondered, well, hoped, that this all was a result of stress, just as Padme presumed. His days with the Jedi Order were coming to an end, and he had a baby on the way. They probably were going to be thrilled with his resignation anyway, he figured. And as for Obi-Wan — he hoped the dream was an indication that he would have his back when that day comes.

These were his daily thoughts that constantly circulated in his mind, contradicting himself. He was always fluctuating between positive and negative thoughts, between light and dark.

Either way, things are looking up, Anakin thought as he headed to the Council Chamber. Thanks to Palpatine's request for Anakin to be his representative on the council, he'll have more *control* over the whole situation. Perhaps everyone would finally meet in the middle.

*But that was just a dream
That was just a dream
Just a dream...*

Losing My Religion — REM

30. Uncontrolled Passion

AN:

DS2010: Yeah I know! But that's the brilliance of the movie. There's so many things that might have changed the course. If Yoda had probed more or if Anakin had opened up more. We'll never know.. :D

Uncontrolled Passion

*I can't tell you what it really is, I can only tell you what it feels like
And right now, there's a steel knife in my windpipe
I can't breathe, but I still fight while I can fight
As long as the wrong feels right, it's like I'm in flight*

Anakin left the Jedi temple, face contorted with rage. His hostile glare not looking anyone in the eyes as he made his way out. All the hope he had had on the way to the temple, gone.

Furious at being denied the rank of Master after the Chancellor worked hard to get him on the council, Anakin felt he had wasted his life serving the Jedi. He was also furious at his old Master for not speaking up for him — making him even more wary of the way he viewed Obi-Wan in his dream of his wife dying.

He didn't even want to be on the council until Palpatine made him feel he was deserving of the promotion. And now, three years into this war, he had hardly anything to show for all his sacrifice. Although a Jedi wasn't supposed to think that way, he was no ordinary Jedi. He had a wife, he had a baby on the way, he was sacrificing time he won't get back — time that took him away from those he loved. What's more, Palpatine had made him realize that being a Master would solve a lot of his problems. His fear had tripled after he dreamt of Padme dying in childbirth, and becoming a Jedi Master would provide him with the resources to save her life.

The council weren't surprised that Anakin took issue with the news. They were however surprised at how he carried himself during the meeting. Anakin was once again proving to his fellow Jedi that he could not control his temper and his lust for power was apparent.

The Jedi had bigger things to focus on than Anakin's ego in this moment. While they were concerned with Anakin's vulnerability, they were more concerned with the Chancellor. The dark side of the force seemed to surround Palpatine. His attempts to get closer to Anakin

made the Jedi suspicious. The only way they could determine Palpatine's true intentions was to gauge his reaction as the war progressed. One way they chose to do this was monitor the Chancellor after they capture General Grievous.

To add to their suspicions, Palpatine wanted Anakin to lead the charge in capturing Grievous. Unfortunately for Anakin, he became a pawn between the two sides. The Jedi needed to see whether Anakin's vulnerability would make him susceptible to Palpatine's plans, and they couldn't risk this mission. So the Jedi chose to send Obi-Wan — someone they could trust that the Chancellor couldn't manipulate. If Anakin had gone, he might report back to the Chancellor first, giving Palpatine time to conceal his true intentions.

With Anakin out of the loop as usual, he was left to believe that they had no faith in his abilities. And this way of thinking was something the Chancellor continued to fuel — making Anakin gain more trust in him than Yoda and Mace Windu. But until now, Anakin was more resilient than he thought he was.

The Jedi were wary of Anakin's friendship with Palpatine, and there was no way they could trust Anakin with the power that comes with being a Jedi Master until they knew more about the Chancellor. This was the ultimate test of Anakin's loyalty, mental strength and self-control as a force user.

Padme glanced out at the landing deck of her apartment as Obi-Wan was dropped off.

"Obi-Wan!" She gasped, running over to greet him.

"Is this a bad time?" He asked, embracing her hug.

"Not at all. Come in!" She gestured

Obi-Wan's eyes darted from her warm eyes to her belly. "Padme! you're..."

Her eyes followed his and her lips curled into a bright, coy smile. "Pregnant, yep."

"Oh." Obi-Wan took a moment to pause. After everything he knew so far, there was a high chance this child was Anakin's, and Obi-Wan was afraid of what this would mean for his future with the Jedi. "Congratulations." He finally forced out a smile.

"Thanks..." She replied, quietly — detecting the concerned look on his face.

"I just came by to . . . I was just wondering if you'd seen Anakin lately." Obi-Wan sighed

Padme gradually began walking over to the couch and Obi-Wan followed. "He — well, he pops in to say hello every now and then." She trailed off.

Technically not a lie... She thought.

"I wanted to catch him before I head for Utapau in a couple of days." Obi-Wan explained. "He... wasn't in a very good mood when he left this morning."

"What happened?" Padme turned back to face him.

"Things didn't go the way he hoped." Obi-Wan imparted. With glazed eyes, his mind drifted off, worried about how everything will unfold for his former Padawan.

“He didn’t get the promotion...?” She blurted out the question. Hoping her knowledge of Anakin’s career wouldn’t raise suspicion.

“No... Not the one he wanted anyway.” Obi-Wan revealed.

Padme finally sat on the couch, her eyes limpid, concerned for her husband — making it obvious to Obi-Wan that this was just as personal for her.

“Doesn’t seem fair, does it?” She shook her head. “He lost his Padawan... He’s served the Jedi in war for the past 3 years, leading them to victory on more occasions than one. All he wants is a title.” She huffed.

“I’m afraid it’s not that simple.” Obi-Wan interjected. “The council needs to be sure that Anakin is ready for the responsibility.” He finally joined her on the couch.

“Hasn’t he proved that?” Padme turned to face him. “Anakin would do anything for the republic.”

“He’d always put those he cared about first.” Obi-Wan’s voice almost sounded derisive to Padme. His face then softened. “I’m not saying that’s a bad thing. But it’s not enough for a Jedi.”

Padme realized what he was saying and the worst part is as much as she was sometimes blinded by her love for Anakin, she couldn’t completely deny that there was any justification for their actions. Anakin definitely had moments where he put his selfish needs above the Jedi’s but she also knew his intentions were always pure — and she wanted the Jedi to see that. She naively thought it was inevitable that they would.

“Give him a chance. I know he won’t disappoint you.” She urged, softly.

“Padme, I don’t have to tell you that Anakin has struggled with authority.” Obi-Wan tried to be as gentle as possible in his delivery. “Now this doesn’t mean that we don’t trust him but... —as a senator, you know better than anyone that the best people to put in positions of power are those who don’t seek it. Can you honestly say that’s Anakin?”

High off love, drunk from hate. The more I suffer, I suffocate, and right before I’m about to drown, she resuscitates me

It’s so insane, ’cause when it’s going good, it’s going great, but when it’s bad, it’s awful, I feel so ashamed

*So lost in the moments when you’re in ’em
It’s the rage that took over, it controls you*

*But today, that was yesterday, yesterday is over
It’s a different day, sound like broken records playin’ over
But you promised, next time you’ll show restraint*

I snapped. Guess I don’t know my own strength

Anakin arrived home in the same foul mood he left the temple with. Padme rushed over to him, wrapping her arms around his neck, pulling him towards her for a kiss. His eyes ablaze, he was a little rough around the edges, but his demeanor softened at one glance into her angelic eyes and the feel of her tender touch. Her succulent lips touched his, and for a moment, he could breathe out a sigh of relief.

“Hey, I’m sorry about what happened with the council.” She soothed, her fingertips circling the nape of his neck, as she leaned in for another sensuous kiss.

“You know?” He tilted his head back to look at her, eyebrow raised.

“Obi-Wan told me.” She breathed out, her hands cupping the sides of his face to comfort him.

“*Obi-Wan*?” He repeated bluntly. If he wasn’t skeptical of Obi-Wan enough already, this was the last straw.

“Yeah, he came by.” She uttered with a heavy breath.

“Obi-Wan was *here*?” He muttered, his brow furrowed.

“Yeah. He was asking about you.” She noted.

Anakin, tight-lipped and jaw clenched, grabbed her wrists as her hands continued to cradle his face, removing them from off of him. He stepped further into the apartment. His hands on his hips, a huff escaped his lips.

Padme observed him, perturbed by his actions.

“Why?” He said through gritted teeth, not facing her.

“He was worried. Wanted to make sure you’re okay.” She assured, catching up to him.

“What did you tell him?” He finally turned back around.

“Nothing.” She murmured

“Nothing?” He questioned, doubting her.

“Just that I hadn’t seen you lately.” She sighed. But despite her seemingly calm demeanor, he couldn’t hide his disdain.

“Then what happened?” He seethed. Padme was anxious, struggling to comprehend his attitude.

“What do you want me to say?” She huffed with a hopeless chuckle.

His eyes locked with hers, taking a step towards her, closing the gap between them.

“You expect me to believe that he came up to our apartment, asked where I was, and went on his way?” His paranoia in full swing. What if the Obi-Wan in his dream was a reflection of what was going on in real life. Was Obi-Wan going behind his back, putting doubts of his competence in Padme’s mind — making her see him the way the Jedi do?

She could feel his breath on her face as he snarled.

“Are you serious?” She groaned, growing tired of his mood swings.

“You lying to me again?” His eyes narrowed in on hers. She felt offended by him bringing up the white lie she made about Clovis.

“Excuse me?” Her eyes widened. She couldn’t make sense of it. Why was he reacting like this to Obi-Wan of all people!

“Why would he come to *you*?” He hissed.

She shook her head and scoffed. “Well, I don’t know, Anakin. Ask yourself why it was so easy for him to guess where you’d be.” She now folded her arms.

“Oh I don’t know.” Anakin mimicked her contemptuous tone as stepped forward again, causing her to step back. Forcing his way through the tiny space between them as he continued to move forward, she found herself caught between him and the wall. “The same way I don’t know why he’d be with my wife when I’m not here.” He growled, even more fearful that his vision in the dream was about to become a certain reality.

“Anakin.” Her voice muffled once she was cornered to the wall. Standing so close to her, his body almost touching hers, leaving her barely any room to breathe. “You need to back off. Now.”

Her glaring eyes and firm voice awoke something in him. Making a fist, he hit the wall beside her, out of sheer hopelessness — once again feeling like he was spiraling out of control.

He stepped back, able to get a hold of his temper before he lost it. He let out a heavy exhale, raising his hand to rub his head and eyes.

“I’m sorry.” He shook his head, disappointed with himself. ‘I didn’t mean to scare you.’ He looked back up at her and then at her belly. “I just... I feel like everything’s slipping through my fingers lately.”

Padme remained silent, watching him trying to grapple with his emotions. He took another deep breath, his eyes glued to the floor.

“And I couldn’t bear if one of those things was you.”

It was now Padme’s turn to release a heavy exhale. Eventually, she stepped towards him with a more sympathetic tone.

“What makes you think you’re gonna lose me?” She asked but he didn’t answer. He just glanced at her with a hopeless shrug. He couldn’t explain it to her. He didn’t know how to tell her how insecure he felt about their future.

“Not the dream again...” She guessed, and his silence confirmed it for her.

“Anakin, don’t do this.” She urged as he turned away. “Don’t shut me out!”

She now pushed her way in front of him, forcing him to face her. With a compassionate gaze, she tried to read his mournful eyes but they were interrupted by his comlink.

“I — I gotta go.” He sighed, regrettably.

“Anakin!—” She persisted but he rushed off. Turning back only to offer her a less-than-comforting “I’ll be back. I promise.”

*You ever love somebody so much you can barely breathe when you're with 'em?
You meet, and neither one of you even know what hit 'em
Just gonna stand there and watch me burn?
Well, that's alright because I like the way it hurts
Just gonna stand there and hear me cry?
Well, that's alright because I love the way you lie*

Anakin met up with Obi-Wan. Hardly enthused by the call. Obi-Wan then gave him news that put the final nail in the coffin for Anakin — to spy on the Chancellor.

The ultimate test for Anakin was what sent him over the edge.

31. Blind Obsession

AN:

Cheire: I don't know how to answer this without giving the ending away :D Haha! What I can say though, since it is already apparent in all the Vader flashbacks, is that she does still die. Sorry that's not the answer you were hoping for :D BUT I hope to do some What If scenarios in the future XOXO

DS2010: Yesss exactly! :(

Blind Obsession

*Come on, come on
Put your hands into the fire
Explain, explain
As I turn and meet the power*

*This time, this time
Turning white and senses dying
Pull up, pull up
From one extreme to another*

“Anakin is loyal to people not principles. And he expects loyalty in return. He will stop at nothing to save me, for example, because he thinks I would do the same for him.” Obi-Wan paused. “Because he *knows* I would do the same for him.” He admitted reluctantly.

It was in this moment while opening up to Yoda, that Obi-Wan realized his own shortcomings as a Jedi Master. Starting out as a reluctant teacher, trying to play the father role but settling for the brother. As time passed, and their bond developed, he actually became the devoted brother. The brother who initially teases, criticizes, and ridicules the younger brother — only to grow to cherish him, and become blinded by his love for him.

Anakin stood outside the door, hearing every word. Hearing about Mace's distrust for him, Yoda's uncertainty, and Obi-Wan's loyalty. Anakin felt betrayed yet guilty at the same time. He felt manipulated throughout this war but what he failed to notice is that Obi-Wan did have his back. Maybe not in the way that Anakin wanted, but Obi-Wan did in his own subtle way.

Anakin's fear of abandonment was always going to get in the way of him ever truly opening up to Obi-Wan. But regardless of where they clash, one thing was true, they could

never betray each other.

And despite Anakin's obsession with saving Padme, deep down he felt he should be heading to Utapau with Obi-Wan — protective of his Master.

"Obi-Wan..." Anakin called out once his master exited the council chamber. Obi-Wan turned to face him, glad to see him.

"I'm sorry." Anakin began. Shaking his head, ashamed, as though this apology is long overdue. "I know I've been a mess . . . I — sometimes come off arrogant, reckless . . . I know I can be selfish at times. But I am truly grateful for everything you've done for me."

A heartfelt smile painted across Obi-Wan's face, almost in awe of his little brother growing into a powerful man.

"Being dangerous is not a bad thing. It only becomes a bad thing when you can't control it." Obi-Wan assured. "You're self-aware, Anakin. You push yourself to do better, to be better. . . You're strong, you're wise... and you've become a far better Jedi than I could ever hope to be. I'm very proud of you."

Anakin offered a sincere nod of gratitude. "Take care of yourself out there."

"I will if you will." Obi-Wan's bubbly nature brought a sense of comfort to Anakin.

"May the force be with you, Master."

"Goodbye old friend." Obi-Wan replied before heading off. "May the force be with you."

There was no doubt that it was going to be a lot harder for Anakin to get by with Obi-Wan not around. And Palpatine knew it.

Anakin realized that it was highly unlikely that he would ever get the support he wanted from the council when it came to his personal issues — and this made his trip to the opera to meet Palpatine far more intriguing.

The Chancellor did say his door was always open. And he seemed to be the only one lending Anakin an ear when he was in turmoil.

And when talking to a young man who felt all hope was gone, those 11 words made Anakin perk up.

Did you ever hear the tragedy of Darth Plagueis the Wise?

*From the summer to the spring
From the mountain to the air
From Samaritan to sin
And it's waiting on the end*

Anakin headed into his and Padme's bedroom, finding her sitting upright in bed tearing open a package.

"Look at this." She chuckled, holding up a baby vest. "Isn't it cute? Sola sent it."

"I love Naboo?" Anakin read on the clothing — crinkling his forehead, letting out a confused smile.

"Yeah." Padme grinned.

"Okay." Anakin shrugged with a light chuckle. But his smile quickly faded as he turned to face the window. Padme noticed.

"Are *you* okay?" She studied him.

"I don't know..." He groaned. "I feel... lost."

"Lost?" Padme got up to join his side.

"I'm not the Jedi I should be." He turned to her. "I want more."

"More what?" She asked softly.

"Control... freedom." He admitted. "And I know I shouldn't." Anakin looked down at the ground, growing more and more despondent.

Padme's pensive eyes gazed at him — her hand caressing his back. "Maybe you should talk to someone. Obi-Wan or Yoda... someone on the council."

Anakin huffed, turning away from her. "Obi-Wan and the council don't trust me."

"Anakin, they trust you with their lives." She assured, almost groaning at his resistance.

"No..." He said roughly. 'And I don't trust them.' He responded darkly, facing her once more with sardonic eyes, as though he had accepted the distance between him and the Jedi. "There's things about the force they're not telling me. They don't want me to have that kind of power."

Padme couldn't conceal her worrisome eyes — worried for Anakin's mental state. "You don't need anymore power... right?" Her words slightly brittle, sounding like a plea.

She couldn't read him as he stared out the window — as if he hadn't heard her. His eyes vigilant, although they weren't focused on anything.

His mind determined with tunnel vision — now knowing what to do. After being at a crossroads, he realized he had to look into the ways of the force that Palpatine could teach him. If there was a way to protect the ones he loved, he had to learn it.

"...I found a way to save you." His eyes met hers as he walked towards her.

"Save me?" Padme blinked.

Anakin wrapped his arm around her waist, gazing at her long, flowing locks as he brushed them behind her shoulders. "From my nightmares."

Padme shaking her head as she peered into his eyes, made an effort to sound reassuring. "Ani, I told you, I'm not gonna die in childbirth. I promise you."

"No, I promise you." He affirmed, his hand reaching out to cradle her face. He left a kiss on her lips as his hand moved to clasp the back of her neck, burying his fingers in her hair as he massaged her scalp.

"Hey!" Padme greeted her sister on the holoprojecter, as she sat at her desk in the bedroom. "Thanks for the baby vest."

"So when are you coming?" Sola got straight to the point as most big sisters do.

"I don't know." Padme sighed. "Anakin is still tied to the Chancellor." There was a hint of annoyance in her voice.

Anakin had spent a lot of time with the Chancellor lately, following Obi-Wan's and the council's orders to spy on Palpatine ever since Obi-Wan left.

Ironical — now that she was home all the time, Anakin spent most of his days at the senate building.

"So why don't you just come?" Sola asserted, and Padme hesitated with a thoughtful pause.

"...He's going through a lot right now. Don't think it'd be good to leave him alone." She answered. Her voice gentle yet vague.

Sola snorted, "*He's* going through a lot? You're the one who's about to pop!"

Padme tried not to laugh at her sister getting all riled up.

"We'll be there soon. Hopefully before I give birth." Padme chuckled warmly.

Just then she heard Anakin walk through the door.

"Sola, I gotta go." She announced. "Anakin's home."

"Wait." Sola interjected. "Let me talk to him... *Alone*."

Padme rolled her eyes. "Okay..." She smirked. "Be nice!"

"Anakin!" Padme called him to the bedroom.

He entered the room, just as Padme was about to leave it.

"What is it?" He inquired, pulling her in for a gentle hug. She beamed up at him, feeling his hand rub her lower back and his lips lightly pressed against her forehead.

"Sola wants to talk to you." Her tone was light and bubbly. She pointed at the desk with the holoprojecter.

He headed over to sit at the desk and Padme left, closing the door behind her.

“Hi Sola, how are the girls?” Anakin let out a slightly exasperated sigh, seemingly uninterested. He had a lot on his mind.

“Why don’t you let Padme come to Naboo.” Sola suggested. It was clear from her tone of voice, she wasn’t exactly asking.

“We’re coming soon.” He mumbled — thinking her suggestion was pointless.

“I mean, why doesn’t *she* come — without you.” Sola reiterated with simple directness.

She could hear Anakin inhale a deep breath from the other end of the call.

“She wants to be here.” He said with a shrug.

“She wants to be there because she thinks that’s what you want.” Padme’s sister spoke with firm persistence.

She paused for a moment, wondering if this was the best approach.

She decided to soften her tone. “She can stay with me. I’ll take care of her. Help her set up the baby’s room... I’ll take her to the doctor — make sure everything’s fine.” She went on loyally.

Anakin shook his head. “She’s safer with me.”

He couldn’t do that. And he couldn’t explain it to Sola. He needed to keep an eye on her.

Sola, frustrated with his curt replies, felt that Anakin was beginning to sound controlling, alienating Padme from everyone else.

Anakin, on the other hand, felt he was completely justified. So what if they thought he was obsessive? He needed to be in control. He couldn’t live with himself if he let Padme out of his sight, and his vision of her dying came true.

He had to do everything in his power to make sure he didn’t lose her. And the best solution he had so far was to keep her near.

“She’s safer in Naboo.” Sola insisted. “—away from coruscant and the stress of the war — with her family.”

Anakin grew tense at her remark.

“*I’m* her family.” He drawled.

Before either of them could say another word, Padme barged in.

“You guys done?” That same cheery attitude of hers felt out of place now.

“Yeah,” Anakin looked up at her as she stood beside him. Wrapping his arm around her, possessively, his fingers splayed across her bottom — indicating that everything was a bed of roses here. “We’re done.”

Padme then glanced at Sola who managed a weak smile.

Padme couldn’t tell that her husband and her sister both changed their tune when she walked in — neither wanting to stress her in the third trimester.

Darth Vader had been coming to terms with his past life, tormented by how things played out, but mostly tormented by his own actions. He didn't want to remember Padme's last days alive. But he had no choice now. Ever since the day he found out he had a son, he was forced to trace his own steps as he searched for answers.

Unfortunately he had to take all the bad memories with the good. He felt a pang of guilt as he remembered his actions upon hearing from ZED that Padme gave birth before she died.

With his fist banging on a front door, the sharp knock had the door rattling.

An older lady opened it, only to gasp at the towering dark figure in front of her.

With a mechanical hiss, Vader spoke. "Did you know your sister's baby survived?"

"I don't have a sister." The lady quivered, doing her best to appear nonchalant.

"You knew, didn't you?" Vader took a step into the house, causing the woman to fearfully step back. "You kept it a secret."

"I have no idea what you're talking about!" The fear in her voice was palpable as she rushed backwards — while his footsteps were slow and daunting.

*"My patience is wearing thin, **Sola**." He warned, gruffly.*

Sola sucked in a breath. He knew who she was. Her shaky legs still treading backwards.

"I swear I know nothing about a baby." She desperately cried out. "...I — I thought it died with her." She stammered.

Her body was halted as she bumped into the kitchen counter behind her. She could hear her own breath quiver now that she had nowhere to run.

Luckily for her, Vader paused, creating space between them.

He turned away, and started circling around, deep in thought.

"You were right..." He finally spoke, not looking at her, or anything in particular. "I should've sent her to you . . . she would've been safe." Overcome with regret, Vader couldn't bring himself to look back up.

Sola's eyes widened, realizing who was the man behind the big, black mask.

"Anakin?" She gaped, putting two and two together. "It is you."

Her eyes caught a glimpse of the counter. Reaching her hand out, she discreetly grabbed a knife.

Gradually making her way towards him, the knife firmly in her hand behind her back.

"You're still alive..." She whispered, absentmindedly as she made her way closer to him.

"And you're the reason she's dead!" Sola wailed, trembling with rage and fear, raising the knife in the air behind Vader's back.

He barely lifted his own hand and, with menial effort, he stilled her movement with the force.

He then turned around — his slightly raised hand controlling hers, lowering it as he pleased.

Screeching as her fingers gripped the knife, she tried to hold onto the knife for as long as she could.

With a twitch of his finger, channeling the force, he stole the knife out of her hand.

Dropping it on the floor, he didn't take his eyes off of her while he used the force to then push the knife further away from them and out of her reach.

She glanced at the knife and her eyes jerked up at the sound of his lightsaber igniting.

He moved hauntingly slow towards her. His red blade blinding her as it hovered before her eyes.

"You think you can kill me?" He scoffed. "I can't kill me!"

He towered over her and she tripped. Propping herself on her elbows, she tried to shuffle away as he continued to aim towards her.

She feared for her life. This was it, she thought. He's going to kill me.

"Please." She begged as he now stood right over her. "I have a family." She whimpered.

Her words left a bitter taste in his mouth.

Family... they were one, once.

After a moment's reflection, Vader shut off his lightsaber.

"You won't speak a word of this." He threatened.

Shoving his cape behind his legs, he stormed out.

And Sola felt an overwhelming sense of relief, catching her shaky breath.

*And now I'm alone I'm looking out
I'm looking in, way down
The lights are dimmer*

Into The Fire — Thirteen Senses

32. Uphill Battle

AN:

Selenese: omg I could cry this review made me so happy! Thank you for your support. I'm so grateful to know you are enjoying the installments so far. There's no bigger compliment than hearing that you're liking the character depiction.

And I agree! I feel he loves Padme so much but like everything in his life, he self sabotages with his fear, which doesn't lead to the healthiest decisions :D

DS2010: If only :(

Uphill Battle

*It doesn't hurt me
Do you wanna feel how it feels?
Do you wanna know, know that it doesn't hurt me?
Do you wanna hear about the deal that I'm making?*

Anakin woke up to Padme bringing him breakfast in bed. She was wearing his tan, baggy undershirt — it was getting harder to find loose-fitting sleepwear with her growing bump. Sitting upright as she placed the tray table over him, Anakin beamed up at her.

"What's the occasion?" He asked, "I should be doing this stuff for you." He acknowledged, rubbing her pregnant belly.

"Well," She began as she crawled into bed beside him. "You've been a lot better at opening up to me lately. I wanted to show my appreciation."

She knew how hard it was for him to talk to her about his growing issues with the Jedi, and he had finally conveyed how he felt, lost.

"Oh. Well, I won't shut up then." He joked, causing her to giggle. An infectious sound that warmed his heart.

After a beat, her eyes settled on him. "...I really do appreciate it." She expressed earnestly.

Anakin looked at her indulgently, and a mischievous smirk spread across his lips. "How much?" he cocked an eyebrow.

"Don't try to get more out of me." She playfully warned.

"I'm kidding." He said with a mouthful of pancake. "You've done more than enough."

She had been his anchor through all the craziness — he didn't know what he'd do without her. And he hoped he'd never have to find out.

"I was thinking..." She began with a twinkle in her eye. "Since you have the morning off..."

"Yeah?" He gave her a sly leer.

She leaned over and pressed her lips up against his ear. With her hot breath on the side of his neck, he felt her teeth nibble on his earlobe.

Overcome with lasciviousness, he quickly placed the tray table on the floor, ready to embrace her as she crawled over him.

Mature

She slowly lowered his black sweatpants down until he was naked before her. Teasing him as her mouth hovered closely over his abdomen, his eyes ogling her impatiently.

Her tongue grazed over everything around the bulge of his appendage, causing him to quietly groan under his breath.

Ever so lightly, her nails scratched along his inner thighs before the delicate touch of her hand subtly caressed his swelling member. Despite how gentle her fingers were and the tenderness of which she stroked him, she still managed to conjure up a sense of roughness and urgency.

Finally, her tongue met the tip of his shaft before her mouth wrapped around it — the titillation alone almost deprived him of his senses.

The elasticity of her hands, her active mouth, and her soft, warm tongue had him squirming under her, clenching his body with his mouth agape. She could hear him panting, as her mouth sunk deeper onto him.

His legs began to tremble as her mouth slid along his manhood, the tempo of her salacious movements increasing as she devoured him. His hand reached down to fondle the back of her head to express his gratitude as she satisfied him, but he became so consumed with his sexual eruption that his fingers haphazardly became entangled in her hair — he could no longer see straight.

He was now caught up in the variety of rhythms her tongue displayed as she possessed him. Her hands fluctuating between tight grips and the lightness of her touch. Heavy inhalations escaped his mouth followed by groans every time her mouth clutched onto him. Her lips brushing along his shaft as her tongue lubricated him.

Struggling to control himself, he looked over at her in between his legs. His hand now grabbing a fistful of her hair tightly in the heat of passion as he pushed her head deeper into him, speeding up the pace.

"Padme..." He let out a rough whisper, as the intensity overpowered him. "I'm gonna—" He released himself in her mouth before his head fell back onto the pillow. Her mouth

continued to engulf him until she devoured the last drop of him, causing his eyes to roll in the back of his head as a shaky moan left his lips.

Catching his breath, the grasp he had on her hair now softened from a fist, his body still quivering as she finally released him from her sensual mouth. His fingers stroked the back of her head, messing up her hair as her soft strands were entwined in each finger.

“What you do to me...” He groaned, almost to himself.

She rested her head on his stomach as his fingers twirled a strand of her hair. Their intimate moment cut short upon the clicking sound of his comlink going off.

“Great timing.” He groaned, getting up, forcing her to roll back onto her side of the bed.

“It’s Palpatine.” He commented, “He wants me to come in now.”

Anakin turned to his wife only to find her face fell at the mention of him leaving earlier than he was supposed to.

“I’m sorry, baby.” He offered a sympathetic sigh.

“He signals you more than Obi-Wan ever did.” She retorted, now sitting upright and resting up against the headboard.

He crawled on top of her, his arms on either side of her, holding himself up. Meeting her at eye level, he shot her an encouraging smile. “At least now I’m home every night.”

There were some perks to working for Palpatine, he thought. Like getting to sleep in their bed instead of at the Jedi temple.

Padme couldn’t deny that she did appreciate him being home more often but that wasn’t enough for her not to be bothered by Palpatine’s constant calls.

“Hey, I won’t be long.” He assured. He gently brushed the tip of her nose with his. “Give me a kiss.”

Padme turned away from his imploring mouth, and Anakin chuckled at her sulking. “Kiss me, woman!”

Mature

As she continued to resist him out of protest, he defiantly leaned back on his knees. In one fell swoop, he grabbed her thighs, catching her off guard, as he dragged her until she was lying flat on her back.

He pressed the full weight of his body over hers, stealing a forceful yet playful kiss before his mouth traveled down to trail kisses all over her pregnant belly.

He then spread her now bent legs open — holding down her thighs, he lowered his head and she could feel his breath on her and a prickling in between her legs.

He took his tongue and lightly licked her from the center of her cheeks to her clitoris — making her shudder.

Then, just as she was ready to surrender, he released her from his hands and mouth.

He stood up, gazing at her with that familiar devilish smirk.

“I’ll see you later.” He winked.

He walked out the bedroom door, and a frustrated Padme playfully threw her pillow in his direction.

Once Anakin flew off to work, Padme heard a knock at the door.

She went to open it, and found none other than Bail Organa and Mon Mothma behind it.

“Hi!” A wide-eyed Padme greeted them, perplexed by their visit.

“We are so sorry to barge in like this.” Bail began, soberly. “But in your absence, there’s a lot going on.”

Padme glanced at both of them, her eyes searching theirs, sensing their perturbation.

Her eyes leveled with Mon’s, who informed her with firm determination. “There’s something you need to know.”

Anakin stood beside the Chancellor, who remained at his desk, when much to their surprise, Padme walked in.

Sporting a purple puff-sleeved dress and a shawl with broaches, Padme was back in her senatorial attire. Her hair was slicked back in that signature tight, high bun of hers, held in place by a hair clip in the shape of the Republic symbol — clearly displaying her political views.

“Chancellor Palpatine.” She announced as both men peered up at her with utter bewilderment.

“Senator Amidala, what a pleasant surprise!” Palpatine forced a smile. “Didn’t think we’d be seeing you back in office for a few months.” His eyes skimmed over her belly that was impossible to conceal now.

“Some things have been brought to my attention. I’d like to discuss them.” Her harsh tone of voice was not lost on the Chancellor... nor her husband.

“Please, have a seat.” He said through gritted teeth. She sat opposite him, taking in a deep, determined breath.

“There have been changes made to the constitution...” She paused, glancing at Anakin. A look that told him her visit wasn’t going to be a pleasant one. “—that no one in the senate approved — there was no democratic vote...”

This was exactly why she was the perfect person to interrogate the Chancellor. She had been responsible for all the pushback he endured. And this way, Bail and Mothma would remain under the radar — and their intentions would be undetectable by Palpatine.

“—we’ve had to make some adjustments, yes.” Palpatine maintained. Slightly annoyed at how accusatory she sounded — as if his actions weren’t reasonable.

“We?” She interjected. “Or do you mean, *you*.” Padme’s scornful stare met the Chancellor’s, with a quizzical look on Anakin’s face as he worriedly glanced at both of them.

“I was voted into this position, senator.” The Chancellor warned with a chilling tone. “The people are entrusting me to make these decisions temporarily. *I* am the one responsible for the outcomes, good or bad, am I not?”

“Then I would urge you to reconsider letting diplomacy resume.” She said with a calm directness.

“Senator, our people have been living in a war zone for the past three years. They’re not looking to negotiate with terrorists. They just want it to end.” His condescension irked her. “If the fastest way for me to end this is to make certain amendments that alter your... *traditions*, then so be it.”

They have had various iterations of this conversation before, and he always twisted her words to deliberately misinterpret her motive. “Those *traditions* ensure people’s freedom. Both sides have rights.” She reminded him that the other side were not to be looked at as targets or *less-than*.

Anakin stood there, helplessly. He couldn’t get involved. If he did, he’d be doing so as a husband, not a professional. And as much as he understood his wife’s intentions, she wouldn’t be too pleased to hear that he agreed with the Chancellor. So he kept his mouth shut.

“People are scared, senator Amidala.” Palpatine leaned forward in his chair. “And when people are scared, they don’t care about their freedoms. They want to feel safe, and I promised them security.”

Padme took a moment to reflect. It was pointless to negotiate with Palpatine. She had no choice but to focus on what changes she actually could make.

“So when you end this war, Chancellor... can I take it there will be no more amendments to the constitution?” This was her extending an olive branch. It was the last chance for Palpatine to get in her good graces.

“I already gave you my word. That should be enough for your committee.” His snarling tone was the final straw for Padme. After doing her best to hide her disappointment, she got up abruptly, offering the Chancellor a controlled smile.

She took one last look at her husband before leaving, seething as he remained a bystander. Anakin looked down at the floor, foolishly — hoping that she wouldn’t take it so personally.

“I’m sorry.” Anakin began once she left. “Senator Amidala is just going through a lot.”

"I understand, Anakin. She's scared, too. Even though she puts on a brave face." Palpatine sighed. "She's an expecting mother... all mothers worry about the world they're bringing new life into."

Palpatine knew what he was doing. He'd play up the role of compassionate leader in front of Anakin to gain his dedication. But with Padme, he could take on a darker role. This way, Padme would be further angered by Anakin's unwavering faith in him, and this would drive a wedge between them. Because Anakin would grow tired of her suspicious nature, especially when she continued to criticize the man who had always been there for him.

"But I can't be burdened with that sort of thing." The Chancellor shrugged. "I need to remain focused on the bigger picture. To ensure a peaceful future for our society."

Anakin nodded. Unable to say much right now. All he could do was remind himself that Padme and any other naysayers would come around when they saw Palpatine's efforts come to fruition.

"Of course, I do have to tread with caution." Palpatine continued. "People's true intentions aren't always clear in times of crises."

Palpatine also knew that there were opportune moments like these to plant subtle seeds of doubt.

"Perhaps there's more to her concerns than she's revealing. She is a very private person after all."

"Private is not synonymous with secretive." Anakin corrected.

"No, but we must be wary, Anakin." Palpatine said sternly. "There are people who might take advantage of these unstable times."

"I can assure you, you won't have to worry about betrayal from Senator Amidala." A light chuckle escaped Anakin's lips.

"She is the one member on the committee who has made the most trips to separatist systems." Palpatine argued. *Behind my back*, he grumbled to himself. "And I need to be on the lookout for those who could be a separatist informant."

Anakin crinkled his forehead, "What are you insinuating?"

"Oh relax, Anakin." Palpatine's face softened as Anakin grew tense. "I'm sure that's not the case with Senator Amidala. She's most likely just worried. But it is also my job to ensure no one stands in the way of peace . . . Don't worry, once the war is over, people like her will rest assured that their fears are a thing of the past. She'll come around. They always do."

Anakin let out an exasperated sigh, hoping the Chancellor was right. In some ways, he felt sorry for him. Palpatine seemed to remain optimistic in front of him, but Anakin knew how it felt to continue to try to do the right thing when everyone else doubts your competence.

"You don't always get a thank you but you do your duty anyway." Anakin murmured, almost to himself.

"We do, don't we?" Palpatine shot him a warm smile.

*You don't wanna hurt me
But see how deep the bullet lies
Unaware, I'm tearing you asunder
Oh, there is thunder in our hearts
Is there so much hate for the ones we love?
Oh, tell me, we both matter, don't we?*

Anakin arrived home to find Padme in the kitchen, dicing vegetables.

He snuck up behind her, placing his hands on either side of her waist. He leaned in to lightly kiss the nape of her neck.

She squirmed away, not looking at him, catching him by surprise.

Popping his head round to look in her eyes, trying to gauge the reason behind her attitude.

But before he could say a word, she shook her head.

"You just stood there." She uttered quietly, appalled.

"What?" He now stood by her side, studying her intently, as her eyes remained on the cutting board.

Her voice was eerily quiet — shocked by what she had just witnessed earlier today. "You knew what Palpatine was doing — all this time . . . And you *just* stood there!" Her voice raised as she reiterated that last sentence.

Anakin released a slow exhale, "Padme—"

"—And I had to find out from my colleagues!" She snapped. "...Because I'm home, heavily pregnant, and alone... and my husband didn't *think* to say anything!"

Anakin, trying not to become irritated by what he considered to be her hormones, watched her begin dicing aggressively.

"You're blowing this out of proportion." Anakin tried to reason, intentionally keeping his voice low to manage his short fuse.

He took a step back, rubbing his forehead as Padme's eyes remained on her task.

"Look I get that you're under a lot of stress..." Anakin sympathized. "You just need some rest and you'll see — it's not as bad as you think."

Unfortunately for him, his light tone of voice didn't rub off on her as he'd hoped.

Instead, it made her tense up. She stopped cutting and stared straight ahead — her eyes glazing over the kitchen counter.

"What I *need* is a husband who won't just stand there while the Chancellor throws away my life's work!" She barked.

Anakin clicked his tongue. Resenting that remark as he observed her.

"Is that what you think of me?" He glared. There was an abundance of hostility in his drawl.

"How long have you known? Huh?" She finally turned to the side to face him. "Weeks, months...?" She waited for an answer that he couldn't provide.

With a fierce exhale, she griped furiously, "and you didn't say anything..."

Anakin huffed, agitated — aggressively running his hand through his hair, brushing his fringe back. "You know what? I don't need this right now."

He was about to turn away but the sound of her voice stopped him.

"Oh because I do?!" She spat.

"You haven't been there, Padme." He insisted. "You don't know what's going on—"

"—exactly!" She cried. Her hands flailed about hysterically. "I didn't know that we apparently no longer need to vote to adjust the damn constitution! The word of one self-serving dictator will suffice. Only destroyed centuries of democracy..." She sneered.

"Dictator?" Anakin mocked with burgeoning derision. "Come on, Padme! You're overreacting . . . Look you heard him, he doesn't want this responsibility."

"Oh please." She rolled her eyes. "There were many solutions he could've considered before this."

"That's what you think." Anakin shrugged. "You don't understand this war."

"I don't understand?!" She resented. "Let me tell you something — I know enough about this war to know that everything Palpatine has done has driven a bigger wedge between us and the separatists."

"Do you hear yourself?" Anakin's forehead wrinkled, scoffing at her. "If it wasn't for the Chancellor, the separatists would have won by now, Padme. He's doing what he can to end this war now. And it would do you and everyone in the senate well to help him."

"Did you know that I've spent the past 3 years coming up with solutions to end this war? To end the killing of innocent civilians? That I've gone so far as to draw up petitions and traveled around the galaxy to get systems to sign an agreement?" She pointed out, crossly. "And do you know who fought me every step of the way? The Chancellor. And today I learn that my own husband not only watched him make these war mongering decisions but didn't think to mention it to me... Just when I thought we were starting to be honest with each other." She exasperated, sighing hopelessly.

"No, no — Padme, don't do this." He warned, putting his foot down. "Don't bring those problems into our home. That has nothing to do with us and our marriage."

"It has everything to do with us!" She shouted. "It has everything to do with you demanding honesty from me and then doing *this*!"

Anakin pinched the bridge of his nose. "You know, I don't need to stand here while you yell at me like a little boy! Call me when you've calmed down." He scowled, storming out.

Shuddering as she heard him slam the door hard, she tossed the knife in the sink in anger.

*And if only I could, make a deal with God
I'd get him to swap our places
Be running up that road
Be running up that hill
Be running up that building
Say, if I only could, oh*

Anakin eventually came back home that night, after cruising around in a speeder for the past two hours, blowing off some steam.

He found Padme curled up on the couch with a blanket.

The intense silence filled the room as he made his way over to join her.

Sitting beside her, with a great distance between them on the couch, neither looking at the other — he finally breathed out. “I’m sorry I left.”

A moment’s pause, and she found her voice.

“I’m sorry I yelled.” Her gloomy eyes remained on the TV.

Anakin, albeit equally as dour, wanted to make amends. “...I’m not trying to keep things from you.” He spoke with quiet empathy after a beat.

“I just didn’t want you to worry. I want your sole focus to be on your well-being. And the baby’s.” He beseeched.

Padme released an irritated sigh. “Pregnancy is a condition, Anakin. Not an illness.”

Not to me, he thought. To him it was a death sentence.

Anakin finally faced her. His imploring eyes now warm as they gazed upon her. “Things are under control. I know you don’t see it. But I’m there everyday, and I can promise you, the Chancellor has thought this through. He’s going to bring peace.”

“By killing the other side?” She hypothesized sarcastically.

“Padme...” He pleaded with a groan, his hand coasting up her silky thigh. “Look, diplomacy will resume. Just have faith.” His eyes begging hers to meet his, while hers were downcast.

“If you don’t have faith in the Chancellor, have faith in me.” His other hand now massaging the back of her head. “I’m going to make sure we end this war. I also know the Chancellor’s number one goal is to stop the fighting.”

“Anakin...” Padme sighed as her tired eyes finally met his gaze, trying to convey her disappointment as delicately as possible. “What if you’re wrong?”

You
It's you and me
It's you and me, won't be unhappy

Running Up That Hill — Kate Bush

33. Wide Awake

AN:

DS2010: Me too :D

LadyVader: Oh my gosh thank you so much! I really appreciate that!

TroySharpay: YAY so glad you liked it :DD

XOXO

Wide Awake

*I was in the dark
I was falling hard
With an open heart (I'm wide awake)
How did I read the stars so wrong?*

*Falling from cloud nine
Crashing from the high
I'm letting go tonight
Yeah, I'm falling from cloud nine*

Anakin was eager to learn the ways of the force that Palpatine could teach him to save Padme. However, there was something holding him back from taking him up on his offer.

While he sometimes failed to remain on the straight and narrow, it didn't change his view of the Jedi code. In fact, seeing just how much discipline the Jedi way required of a person made him have a deeper appreciation for it. He wanted to live up to it, even though he sometimes felt it was impossible.

He didn't have much time — he had to act now. With Yoda and Obi-Wan away, the only person left to consult was Mace Windu. And Anakin was getting desperate for a solution.

“Master Windu.” Anakin arrived at the council chamber. “Got a minute?”

Mace Windu nodded, signalling for him to enter. It was quiet with just the two of them in there — you could hear an echo.

“What is it?” He observed Anakin.

“Well...” Anakin paused, with his eyes downcast. “I actually wanted to talk to you about gaining access to the restricted section of the library.”

Mace shot him a look of condescension as though Anakin was wasting his time.

“You’ll get access when you’re a master.” He replied bluntly.

“I guess I’m asking for an exemption.” Anakin stood firm, refusing to bow down.

What a shocker, Mace derisively thought to himself.

“So once again you’re asking to twist the rules to your benefit.” Mace concluded

“It’s not as selfish as it sounds.” Anakin’s voice sounded less coarse as he now tried to make an appeal.

“Isn’t it?” Mace questioned as he made his way over to his seat.

“Have a seat, Skywalker.” He advised Anakin to join him.

Once Anakin sat down, Mace looked like he was gathering his words.

“I understand better than you think.” Master Windu began. “When I was your age, I was fueled by that same perseverance, determined to achieve excellence in my skills with the force. And then when things didn’t go according to *my* plan, I’d get angry. But you learn to let go... Let go of any insecurities that have you thinking something will go wrong. Don’t let your pride override your patience.”

Mace Windu understood the effort it requires to remain in control when things don’t go the way you want. This was what irked him about Anakin. He didn’t trust him because he felt Anakin hadn’t earned his respect. It takes resilience to overcome your arrogance and accept the things you cannot control. And Mace didn’t like that Anakin was not practicing patience. According to Mace, Anakin didn’t even seem to try.

Of course, Anakin could feel Mace’s distrust in him — whether fair or not. He didn’t understand why Mace was hard on him or why he held him to such a high standard. And Anakin couldn’t handle another person feeding his own personal issues with self-doubt. It was hard not to get defensive.

It was very difficult to take criticism when you feel like you can’t overcome your fears no matter how hard you try — and even harder to take it when you feel that those criticizing you don’t understand you, and already have their mind made up about you. It was only natural for him to compensate by proudly and arrogantly proving that he’s good enough.

Later that same morning, Anakin arrived at the Chancellor’s office. His expression grim, disgruntled by his failure to resolve things with the Jedi.

“You alright, son?” Palpatine looked up from his desk as Anakin roamed around the office — his hands tucked in his cloak.

“I’ve been thinking...” Anakin said once he stopped pacing. “—about the right path for me. Sometimes I want to leave the Jedi order. Sometimes I’m actually hell-bent on it.”

This was what he wanted from the Jedi — to be as comfortable expressing any hesitation or confusion he felt in good confidence. Palpatine always listened.

Anakin paused, conflicted between his options. He still believed in Jedi principles, he just didn't agree with the council. He wasn't entirely sure what to do. He wanted to be with Padme more than anything, but he'd have to leave the order to do it. And the truth was, although he rarely admitted it to himself, he really wanted both. He wanted the family but he also wanted the power — power means control; control meant he could keep his loved ones safe.

"I understand." Palpatine never failed to reassure him that his words would never be met with judgment.

Anakin released an exasperated sigh. He didn't have the mental capacity to go over the same old thoughts anymore.

He eventually took a seat, resting his arms on the armrest, and met the Chancellor's gaze.

"Got a job for me?" Anakin joked, trying to shrug off his own mood and cover it up with light humour.

Palpatine chuckled softly, helping to cultivate a relaxed atmosphere for him. "You always have a job here. . .but is that what you really want?"

"I don't know." Anakin grumbled, rubbing his eyes. "...I believe in the Jedi philosophy. It's just not enough." He slouched in his chair. "Who knows, maybe I'm not strong enough to live up to it. I just want the freedom to do what *I* want. And I know that's selfish."

"See, that's always been my gripe with the Jedi." Palpatine tutted. "They have you believing that it's selfish to ask for what you want."

"They're not wrong... I don't think." Anakin said with a shrug. "Everyone else is able to find peace and validation in serving others. I seem to be the only one with the urge to possess more."

"Why is that a bad thing? You're hungry, you're ambitious." Palpatine presented in a suggestive manner. "Don't get me wrong I'm all for earning your place but. . .surely we deserve *some* reward. Isn't there a deeper intimacy when you don't share something with anyone else? When you have it all to yourself."

"It's a slippery slope." Anakin shook his head as if he was actively trying not to be seduced by the idea of indulgence, possession and personal rewards. "It can easily result in greed."

"Or appreciation for the pleasures in life." Palpatine leaned back in his chair, confidently as he whimsically lured Anakin in. "Your own house, your own vehicle, your own lover..."

Anakin remained silent. These incentives were on his mind more than he'd like to admit but he strived to avoid being enticed by them. These were *attachments*, and oh how he wished he didn't long for attachments.

Palpatine could sense how fiercely Anakin tried to resist the turning of his own mind. "It is not a home until it is filled with your things that you love." Palpatine continued with a

cunning glow of lust in his eyes. “It is not your vehicle until you are the one to drive it. . .it is not your lover, until they give themselves only to you.”

Anakin couldn’t ignore the intense conflict within him. It was almost hard to breathe as he tried to rationalize his feelings, trying to gauge what is morally right or wrong. His endurance was constantly tested to the point where he wanted to snap.

“Anakin.” Palpatine dragged him out of his apprehension. “It is only natural to have the feelings you do. Ever since I’ve known you, you have searched for a life greater than that of an ordinary Jedi. A life of significance, of conscience. And you’re not wrong for that. You understand the importance of autonomy. You understand the importance of making yourself happy... You cannot pour from an empty cup, Anakin. Some parts of one’s life deserve to be private, personal, self-satisfying. You deserve to have something just for you... I’d say the validation of a title, the freedom of choice in your career and personal life, and the right to privacy makes you better. It gives you a deeper purpose. Like secretly running off to Naboo to marry senator Amidala.”

Anakin’s eyes lifted like a bolt of lightening. “Excuse me?” His voice trembling.

“A private marriage... I’m sure that ‘*selfish*’ act was worth it.” Palpatine followed up.

“I, uh—” Anakin stuttered, slightly fidgeting in his seat. His eyes riddled with confusion, discomfort.

“I don’t judge it, Anakin.” Palpatine reassured once he saw Anakin trying to piece things together. “You’re a better warrior because of your determination. A relationship with your family gives you focus.”

Anakin stood up abruptly, silencing the Chancellor. “How do you know all this?” He interrogated, suspiciously.

“Oh Anakin, you need to start asking the right questions... The real question is. . .are you going to let her die?” Palpatine specified.

“What did you say?!” Anakin tensed up, his chest puffing.

Anakin’s stomach was in knots. He devoutly wished what he had realized wasn’t true. Palpatine was the sith lord. One of the few people he entrusted, the one person offering the power and knowledge to save Padme was engrossed in the dark side. The only solution he had so far was to interfere with what came naturally to the force. It felt wrong but it was all he had.

Mace Windu could feel Anakin’s very emotional connection to the news when Anakin informed him of what Palpatine had confessed. This resulted in Mace ordering him to stay behind because he knew Anakin was too close to it all to think clearly.

So Anakin was left in the council chamber, drowning in his anguish, fear and conflict. He shed a tear, confused as to what to do. Palpatine was a *sith*. Everything he knew about his father-figure prior to this made it far more complicated for him than the Jedi understood. And Mace was about to solidify the fact that Anakin has lost another attachment. Once again,

Anakin felt abandoned. But what could he do? It was clear as day, this was about right and wrong, wasn't it?

Anakin sorrowfully looked out the window, his despairing eyes settling on Padme's apartment. Palpatine was his only hope, his only connection to a certain power — the power to save *her*.

Overcome with the fear of loss, he was fully immersed in his need to keep her. *How could the dark side be so bad if it can save a woman who was so good*, he contemplated.

*And now it's clear to me
That everything you see
Ain't always what it seems (I'm wide awake)
Yeah, I was dreaming for so long*

*I wish I knew then what I know now
Wouldn't dive in, wouldn't bow down
Gravity hurts, you made it so sweet
'Til I woke up on—on the concrete*

Padme sat on her couch — in her hooded and patterned green velvet dress with a purple silk sash; her bouncy, cascading chestnut curls more lustrous than ever since her pregnancy — her mind racing.

She struggled to reconcile her husband with his actions lately. She could tell he was lost and she started to worry that he was changing, affected by something bigger than them.

The events of last night occupied her thoughts. He had come home frustrated with the Jedi council...

Anakin stormed into the apartment, clearly absent minded to his surroundings. He was mumbling something about the Jedi council. She couldn't quite make out what it was as she approached him from the bedroom.

He began rummaging through kitchen drawers — pulling them all out, making a mess.

"Anakin." She called out as he cursed under his breath about looking for a screw to fix a droid, unable to hear her. She made her way towards him, as he now slammed cabinet doors shut, unable to find what he was looking for.

She grabbed his arm, forcing him to face her. "Anakin!" She repeated firmly.

He finally turned to look at her, his gaze falling on her soothing eyes. Something about the touch of her hand always brought him out of his thoughts. Letting out an exasperated sigh, seemingly relieved that she had snapped him out of his frustrations, he pulled her in for a desperate hug.

"I'm sorry." He shook his head, once again his voice stained with disappointment in himself.

"It's okay." She encouraged once she felt his arms surround her. She always felt a heartwarming rush whenever he eagerly wrapped his arms around her for closeness.

Her arms wrapped around him tightly, her fingers massaging his hair. She closed her eyes, yearning to comfort him as well as she could.

He dropped his forehead on hers, and his lips collapsed onto hers like they were starving. His forceful kisses took her by surprise.

He latched onto her, walking her backwards to the wall. It all happened in a flash, she could barely keep up with him.

She managed to pry her lips away from his in the midst of their intoxicating embrace.

"Anakin," She breathed out. "...maybe we should talk." She grew concerned over his adamance to escape whatever was going on in his mind — and using her to do it.

"No, Padme, come on." He whined — his forehead resting on hers. "I don't wanna talk." He groaned, his lips reaching for hers once more.

She turned away slightly, hoping he would pace himself but his urgent eyes got the best of her.

"Please." He murmured with a whispery drawl, his hands tugging at her dress.

His voice made her weak in the knees and, with one glance at his harmonious face, she knew there was no way she could resist.

Mature

Anakin's big hands were gliding down her body, while he stole fervent kisses — his tongue vehemently took over her mouth.

*His impatient desire for her made her head spin, igniting a fire within her. She had completely succumbed to him as his hands possessed her. Her back curved, her swollen lips parted, ready to receive him whenever he wanted. Her body was now begging for his. She almost hated the effect he had on her. **Almost.***

Before she could take another breath or think another thought, he spun her around. She pressed her hands against the wall and she could feel his body behind her, pressing up against hers. He buried his face in her neck, his lips brushing along her sensitive skin so lightly, it made her ache.

"Pull up your skirt for me." That distinctive raspy voice purred in her ear. She obliged, hiking it up for him. He relished in the view, watching with his mouth agape, as she exposed her skin inch by inch. And she could immediately feel his ardent, burning stare on her derriere, admiring it as his rough hands tenderly caressed it. She could hear him breathing heavily, aroused by the sight of her bare bottom.

Suddenly, his fingers gripped her hips, lifting her up against the wall — using the force to hold his petite wife up to his height.

“Anakin!” She gasped as he raised her in the air and she could no longer touch the floor. Her hands were firmly placed on the wall for a sense of stability.

“I’ve got you.” He grunted out before entering her from behind. His body flattened hers against the wall, and she loved how he felt inside her and against her back.

He was desperate to take charge. The same way he loved to fix things, which was why he panicked earlier when he couldn’t find a particular screw. If he could get a handle on things, he wouldn’t feel so powerless like the outside world made him feel lately. Power made him feel that he was in control, that he could make things go the way he wanted, especially in times where everything else felt unstable. Being in control gave him a sense of mental stability. And she allowed him to feel like it was all in the palm of his hands.

But something started to shift for her. She felt a disconnect as he plunged into her. There was something different about the way he made love — like he wasn’t present with her; like all his efforts were simply to escape his own negative thoughts.

She could feel his nose nuzzling into her hair, as he continued to thrust into her, his movements erratic — and she wanted to feel their connection but it didn’t feel right.

His nose buried in her curls, he groaned with pleasure at the softness of her voluminous hair all over his face. She closed her eyes as his fingers clutched onto her hips even tighter as he released himself.

He then slowly placed her feet back on the ground and kissed the back of her head before walking into the bathroom.

She then lied in bed that night, wondering what went on in that mind of his. She couldn’t help but worry what stress was doing to him. She just wanted her husband back. It had been a tough couple of days for them, from their fight over Palpatine and politics to his sudden outbursts over the smallest things. He was on edge a lot lately.

But once he laid in bed beside her, he reached for her and pulled her body towards his — spooning her from behind as his lips touched the nape of her neck.

“I love you so much.” He spoke softly.

Just when she thinks she’s gauged him right, he manages to pleasantly surprise her. One embrace, one heartwarming phrase, and her unshakeable belief in him returned. He was still her attentive husband. And she chose to believe that — so consumed in her love for him that all her concerns fade away when he holds her tight.

“You’re so good to me.” He uttered roughly, “So patient.”

He squeezed her tighter. “I know I’ve been all over the place... I’ve just been so frustrated with the council.” She didn’t know exactly what was going on between him and the Jedi council but she could tell he was spreading himself thin.

She gave his arm that wrapped around her pregnant belly a sympathetic squeeze.

“But I promise you I’m gonna be a better husband.” His muffled voice soothing her as he pressed his lips on her shoulder, giving her skin a gentle kiss. “I’m gonna be home more. I’m gonna help out more.” He insisted.

“Anakin...” She sighed, turning around to face him. ‘If anything I think you need to do less, not more. You expect too much of yourself.’ Her fingers trailed over his cheek. “We can help each other... do things together.”

He nodded, one side of his lips curved into a half smile... even though he knew that he couldn’t do that.

By the time Padme woke up this morning, she was relieved of her doubts. Anakin woke up in a better mood, and planted a sweet peck on her lips before he went off to work. It was one of those hello/goodbye kisses that you expect to do forever whenever you greet your spouse at the door.

But now as she stood by the window in her green velvet dress, looking out at the sky, she was overcome with uncertainty again. She could feel him. She was soulfully connected to him forever; their connection further amplified through their unborn force-sensitive child.

She could feel the instability of the city. Something wasn’t right, and she was worried... She had no idea what was going on out there, or what the future holds.

But one thing was for sure, she couldn’t bear it if anything happened to him and he couldn’t bear anything happening to her.

*Thunder rumbling
Castles crumbling
I am trying to hold on*

*God knows that I tried
Seeing the bright side
I’m not blind anymore*

Vader was almost blinded by the flash of lightning that left the Emperor’s fingers. He glanced from Luke to the Emperor, and one of Anakin’s prominent memories sprung to mind.

Anakin remembered standing there in the Chancellor’s office, almost blinded by the flash of the lightning that left Palpatine’s fingers. He glanced from Mace Windu to the Chancellor.

Realizing he had been here before, Vader felt a familiar feeling in the pit of his stomach. He felt sick, lost and frightened, just like he did back then. And then something inside him clicked. After years of trying to creep out of his own dark hole, Anakin finally reached the surface and awoke within him.

He remembered why he joined the dark side in the first place and it wasn't because he had thought it through. He joined in a panic, in a moment of desperation. Palpatine had promised to save the woman he loves. But it wasn't up until this very moment that he realized that was never true at all. As he watched the Emperor attack his son for not joining them, he realized Palpatine would have killed Padme himself if she too defied them.

And suddenly it all made sense. This was the trap of the dark side, the ruse, the curse... seductive enough to convince you to do the wrong thing for the right reasons, taking your good intent and twisting it until it makes you egocentric.

He failed to save the woman he loved because of his selfish choices. And now he realized he had that same choice again. Only this time, it wasn't selfish. It was the most selfless act he could do... save his son.

Until now, Vader was unable to realize who Luke really was. He knew in theory this was his son but he was so devoid of an emotional connection, he couldn't resonate with it. It was only now, in this moment, as Anakin emerged from deep within Vader, that he could finally soulfully connect to Luke. He was his *son*. He had to save him. Even if it meant giving up all the power that he was always too afraid to let go of. He didn't need that anymore. He was finally doing what he set out to do all those years ago... he was saving someone he loved.

Katy Perry — Wide Awake

34. Below The Surface

AN:

DS2010: Exactly :)

Below The Surface (Order 66)

*Listen close, follow my instructions
There is no time for introductions
He was the one that made us
You'll be the one to save us*

*His voice means to deceive you
My voice just wants to lead you*

Mace Windu was gone. Anakin dropped to his knees in shock, unable to fathom what he had just done. In a panic he made a decision that would have him veer so far off course.

A disheveled, hyperventilating, fingers trembling, Anakin was frozen in time. His eyes fell to the floor. He felt like a frightened little boy, desperate to wake up from his nightmare.

"You did the right thing, Anakin." Palpatine spoke. His voice a deep, rumbling sound.

A petrified Anakin's eyes returned to the window, still trying to process it.

"Too late to turn back now." He quavered with fear.

It was official. He had burned every bridge.

"It is our duty to bring peace to the galaxy." Palpatine proclaimed. "Before the Jedi manage to take over. We can do it together."

Anakin could barely hold himself up, leaning his hand on his thigh.

"Just help me save Padme's life." He pleaded, weakly. "I can't live without her." Just the thought made his head drop, his eyes fall closed, unable to cope.

"Join me. . . as my apprentice, and together we'll do what no one's done before." Palpatine persuaded.

"I'll do it." Anakin slowly breathed out, nervously. His hopeless eyes staring up at Palpatine. "If you can help me, I'll do whatever you ask."

“Good.” He replied in a rasping tone. “You’re a Sith now. Darth. . .Vader.” Palpatine’s low, grating tone traveled across the room. Anakin felt a tightness in the pit of his stomach. His hair greasy, his heart heavy, and dark circles wrinkled under his now bleak eyes. His Jedi robes rumpled, hanging off him.

“Thank you, my master.” Anakin drawled in a perpetually tired voice. Physically, mentally and emotionally exhausted, Anakin began to tune out to avoid facing, *and feeling*, reality.

Anakin marched towards the Jedi temple with the 501st Legion. Still fluctuating between light and dark, never really sure who was telling the truth, Palpatine or Mace. However, in the end, he made a decision — choosing between the lesser of two evils for him and what would benefit him. Either way, the Jedi still failed — they weren’t innocent — even if they weren’t as bad as Palpatine claimed.

But once he took the lives of his fellow Jedi, he could no longer live with that uncertainty. He couldn’t do these things without being sure that he was doing it for the right reasons. He saw Mace attack Palpatine. He saw him fail to live by the code. He saw him willing to kill for a win — something Anakin was chastised for doing. Thus, everything the Jedi claimed they stood for, didn’t seem true at all.

So from this moment on, in his mind, Palpatine was right. What he saw was, in fact, Mace Windu — with permission from the Jedi — trying to overthrow the republic.

But even that wasn’t enough as he now stood before the dozens of younglings looking to him for guidance. There was only one way he could do his duty, and that was to separate himself from what he was about to do.

Because Anakin would never and could never do this, he thought. But Vader would.

Creating an alter-ego absolved him from all responsibility.

*Below the surface
Built without purpose
Did we deserve this?
You’re here to serve... us*

Padme looked on as smoke soared into the air. The Jedi temple had fallen.

Her eyes began to well up with tears. The Jedi temple, the sacred building that was the epitome of hope was now under attack. The protectors of the republic may not survive this war.

She turned away from the window, feeling cramps in her stomach and her legs and back ached — clearly the stress was affecting her pregnancy. Because the one thing that frightened her more than anything else is what if Anakin is in that building?

3PO tried to offer her words of solace, and she put on a brave face but the minute he shuffled away, she burst into tears.

Luckily for her, just as she was about to drown in her despair, she saw him come flying in.

She ran into his arms, and breathed in his scent. Sighing in relief as her husband held her close.

“You’re okay.” She whispered, almost to herself. He nodded, pressing his lips to her head.

“I just came to check on you and the baby.” His fingers clutched on the material of her dress that hugged her waist, craving her now more than ever. He couldn’t lose her. It made the day he had worth it, to come home now knowing he can and will save her life.

She offered him a faint smile — not knowing what was happening out there but grateful for him. Her tall, handsome, *strong* husband came soaring across the galaxy to check on her. He was safe, and he was *here*, making sure she was safe too.

“What is going on?” She fretted, holding onto him hopelessly.

He looked down at the ground. This was it, the moment he realized he had sealed his fate. He wasn’t looking into her eyes as Anakin. Vader was in control now.

And since he couldn’t hold his wife with the same hands that caused all this destruction, the same hands that took the lives of innocent children while she carried his, he had no choice but to allow Anakin to sink further and further into the back of his mind. Anakin was too weak to face this, he thought. He tried to pull him out but he couldn’t. So Vader was determined to create a reality that would reassure Anakin — one he could accept; one he truly believed.

“The Jedi have tried to overthrow the republic.” Vader replied, turning away from her.

“What?” She winced. Her forehead wrinkled, trying to piece things together but something felt off. And he still wouldn’t face her.

After a beat, Vader took a breath, feeling more confident now with what he stood for.

“It has become clear to me that they’re the ones who will stand in the way of peace.” He realized. And now he could face her.

“Did the Chancellor tell you that?” She questioned, her wary eyes following his.

“No, Padme!” He grew defensive, impatient. “I saw it with my own eyes!”

A bug-eyed Padme was taken aback by his outburst at first. But after a moment’s reflection, she realized just how traumatic that may have been — to see the attack first-hand.

Her face softened and she eventually headed towards him.

“Hey,” She sympathized, caressing his arm. “I didn’t mean to — I’m sorry...”

Vader finally looked deeply into her eyes. Her soft, earnest eyes that reminded him that everything was going to be alright.

“I’m just scared.” She sighed heavily.

“Don’t be.” He assured, reciprocating her warm embrace. “It’s all gonna be okay now. I’m going to end this war.”

She wished it was as reassuring as he made it out to be. But the truth was she didn’t understand how anyone could come back from this.

He could see it in her eyes, she was hesitant to believe him. But he didn’t worry. As he began to picture the outcome of all of this, he grew more confident, knowing he had the authority he always wanted. And with Palpatine’s encouragement, he was unstoppable.

“Look at me.” He tipped her chin up to plant a slow, sensuous kiss on her lips. “Have faith, my love.”

From now on he’d be able to kiss his wife in front of everyone wherever and whenever he wanted. He didn’t have to hide their marriage. He didn’t have to silently watch other men approach her. He could finally claim her in public.

That soothing voice of his did help calm her nerves. And the fact that he had the courage of his convictions did make her feel better.

One thing she appreciated about her husband was that he always knew what to do in a crisis.

He ran his fingers through her hair, smiling at the thought of their new beginning. “I’ve gotta go find the separatists on Mustafar. If anyone asks, you haven’t seen me.” His hand now resting on the side of her neck, his thumb stroking her cheek. “People might have questions, and may even try to manipulate the situation — given what’s just happened. But it is our job to restore peace. So promise me, you’ll stay strong... We’ve got this.”

She nodded, hoping he had a solid plan and chose to trust his judgment.

With his hand lightly cupping her neck, his thumb and index finger cradled her chin. He leaned in for another kiss, savoring the moment before he headed out.

Vader went on his way to the Mustafar system. His mind blank as he strutted into the factory. All the separatists took notice — well aware that this was Sidious’ new apprentice.

He closed off every entrance, leaving them nowhere to run. One of them barely managed to get a word in before they were sliced by Vader’s lightsaber. The blinding flash of blue light had the others running for cover.

As Vader stormed in, in a blazing rage, slashing one person after another, each screaming out in pain from the burning blade.

“The war is over!” A man cried out as Vader approached him. Vader watched the man’s trembling lip as he took his last breath.

Vader moved so fast across the room, taking out everyone in his way in the blink of eye, whether it be through a force-choke, force-throw or lightsaber. He didn’t care as he violently thrashed through them.

“Wait!” A woman snapped. “Enough!”

Vader stopped in his tracks, surrounded by dead bodies with this one woman left standing.

“We were promised a reward!” She roared, defiantly, fighting for their rights. “A *handsome* reward.”

Vader let out a deep, irritated sigh, as though he took a moment to groan. He strolled over to her — his cape flowing behind him, his menacing stare shot through her now that he made eye contact, the smoky blue light of his lightsaber fell across one side of his face.

Haunted by the steady footsteps charging towards her, she sucked in a nervous breath, intimidated by the towering figure who now stood right before her eyes.

Hovering over her like a dark shadow, he leaned forward, lowering his hood. “You don’t find me handsome?” He asked with utter confidence — as if it was his most obvious feature.

Her eyes raised, meeting his smoldering stare. *It’s Anakin Skywalker*, she realized. The Republic General. The hero with no fear — no, *stronger* than fear.

And he held her eyes until the moment his flickering laser sword struck her in the chest out of the blue. He watched her fall to the floor, eyes wide but now lifeless.

Vader stepped over her body and glanced around to find one last living being hiding under the desk.

Viceroy Gunray jumped up.

“Stop!” He pleaded. “Don’t kill me! We are the ones who backed Lord Sidious! You can’t try and double cross us!” He anxiously rambled on.

“You think you’ve been treated unfairly?” Vader said dryly.

“Yes!” Gunray blurted out in a panic as Vader lifted his lightsaber to the man’s torso.

In one fell swoop, Nute Gunray was slashed in half. His body dropped to the floor.

Vader bent down, waving his blade over the body once more until it cut across the Viceroy’s neck.

“That one’s for my wife.” Vader stated with a growl.

I am Darth Vader...

I am the monster within Anakin Skywalker.

Surrounded by darkness as I bury Anakin deeper and deeper below the surface — clinging onto her for she is my only light in the dark.

I shed a tear as I come to terms with what I’ve done. I have destroyed both sides fighting in the war, I rationalize to myself.

I am the hero I always wanted to be.

With each kill that sentiment feels more and more believable. I become desensitized to witnessing people take their last breath, to their bodies turning cold.

First time I took a life, I cried. I could feel it in my soul that the satisfaction of revenge was fleeting, and then you're left empty and hollow. It burns you forever.

Second time I took a life, I didn't cry but I still felt sick. I felt wrong.

Then the third, fourth, and fifth stopped having the same impact. It got easier to convince myself that it wasn't as bad as I thought. The sick feeling in your stomach goes away quicker. It doesn't keep you up at night as much as it used to.

Then observe yourself from the sixth to the hundredth kill, and you're convinced you were doing the right thing. You're the good guy, remember. You're ridding the world of bad guys.

It doesn't take long for your lies to make sense.

By the time I killed Count Dooku with Palpatine's approval, as he said he was too dangerous to be left alive, I hesitated. For the first time, I questioned myself. In hindsight I now know it's because Palpatine was a Sith, and they fed off of revenge. But even then I knew revenge is wrong. I'm the good guy, remember?

So when Mace said those same words, I realized the Jedi too could be selfish. They too could seek revenge. What's the difference between a Jedi and a Sith? Everyone exerted their power over others when it was convenient. So maybe I shouldn't feel so guilty for wanting that same power.

The Jedi weren't as connected to the force as they should've been. They weren't allowing it to guide them. Instead, their political affiliations lead them to fight in war not keep the peace. So why should I have any faith in the light side of the force? Especially since light force users had no intention of helping me lean into the light in me.

The Jedi failed to realize that love would bring balance to the force. And now they're going to see what the absence of love can do to a man.

I'm the good guy, I repeat in my head as I stand on the bridge overlooking the pool of lava. I'm doing it for the republic. I'm doing it for peace. I'm doing it for love.

I had no choice.

I had to keep reminding myself that because I couldn't accept the truth that I too was selfish — that I destroyed the entire galaxy and ruined the lives of everyone I knew, and everyone I didn't know.

It's too late to turn back now.

I couldn't let go so I gave in. . .to every dark thought, every dark impulse.

I now have all the power I've always wanted.

So...

I am Darth Vader.

I have to believe I am the hero. I am protecting my wife and child. I'm doing this for her.

I am the anti-hero, the villain, the monster I never wanted to be.

*There's no one left to find you
I'll take your place inside you*

*I'll take your place behind the mask
And I'll be first, and you'll be last
Yeah, you'll be last*

Griffinilla — Below The Surface (sped up)

35. Bound To You

AN:

Princesselsaamidala22: Yeah :(

DS2010: Yep it does :(

Bound To You

*Sweet love, sweet love, trapped in your love
I've opened up, unsure I can trust
My heart and I, we're buried in dust
Free me, free us*

*You're all I need, when I'm holding you tight
If you walk away, I will suffer tonight*

“Obi-Wan!” Padme ran to hug him as soon as he landed on her deck. “I’m so glad you’re alright.”

As she looked into his eyes, she could see his visit wasn’t going to be a pleasant one. His eyes were full of despair and defeat.

“Padme...” He finally managed to breathe out. “I need to find Anakin. Have you seen him?”

“Uh — no.” Stuttering, Padme looked away, heading into the living room as nonchalantly as possible. “Not lately.”

“Padme.” Obi-Wan exhaled. His grave tone made it easy to read the fixed expression on his face. ‘I understand this is difficult. More than you know. But. . .Anakin — Anakin’s in danger.’ He paused, struggling to understand it all himself. “He was deceived by a lie... We all were.”

“Palpatine. I knew it.” Padme shuddered before turning back to face Obi-Wan, determinedly. “Well, if everyone knows the truth then we can confront the Chancellor.”

“I’m afraid Anakin won’t make that easy.” It was now Obi-Wan’s turn to turn away from her.

“What do you mean?” She studied him. But all the confirmation she needed was visible from his plaintive sigh.

“Anakin is on his side.” Obi-Wan said after a beat. ‘Palpatine is the Sith Lord we’ve been looking for.’ He explained with such gravity in his voice. “He’s convinced Anakin — he’s — Anakin’s turned to the dark side.”

“What?” Padme was left aghast, unable to speak.

“I’m sorry.” Obi-Wan replied despondently as he watched Padme slowly sink down onto the couch. “I didn’t wanna believe it either.”

She shook her head defiantly, anxiously. “You have to be mistaken, I—”

—“It’s no mistake.” Obi-Wan joined her on the couch. “I wish it was...” His eyes fell on ground before resting back on the couch. Now lost in his own thoughts — fiddling with his beard nervously as the images of Anakin’s betrayal swirled in his head.

“I saw a security hologram of him.” He mourned quietly, struggling to get the words out — agonized by the memory. “He was behind the attack on the Jedi temple. He — he killed them all. . .even the younglings.”

“That’s not possible!” Her eyes searched for hope, relief, anything that would refute this.

It couldn’t be, she thought. He couldn’t have done that and then rushed over to her right after the purge. She shook her head again. She wouldn’t even let Obi-Wan’s words sink in. There had to be a mistake. She couldn’t believe any of it.

Her eyes stared out into space. Her heart so heavy, it sunk into her stomach.

Obi-Wan watched her, she was paralyzed with fear. He could see it in her eyes, she felt the same way he felt — that it was impossible to accept that someone they love would ever do this. What was most interesting, though, was that his grief and her fear looked eerily similar. Perhaps they both had their respective doubts. He so badly wanted to believe Anakin hadn’t fully left them. And she seemed to be fighting with herself, trying to deny what Anakin was capable of.

“I know this is a lot to take in.” Obi-Wan spoke eventually, placing his hand on hers. “But I need to know where he is. If you know anything—”

Padme slowly peered up at him. “You’re going to kill him aren’t you?” She realized, breathlessly. She knew in her heart Obi-Wan was a good man who always strived to do the right thing. But killing her husband meant killing her. Regardless of the truth, she was bound to Anakin.

“I hope it doesn’t come to that.” He spoke with a sense of guilt.

“I’m sorry.” Padme placed her hands over her mouth, wanting to protect her husband. “I can’t help you. I — I don’t know where he is.” She tried to sound firm but the fragile cadence in her voice gave her away.

Obi-Wan let out a gloomy sigh as he got up. He had to do this on his own.

He began to head out as Padme remained seated, still in shock.

He glanced at her once more, and with graceful simplicity, he uttered: “Anakin is the father, isn’t he?”

Padme's eyes were downcast. Knowing that everything was written on her face. She would lie to protect Anakin and Obi-Wan knew it. So there was no point in putting up a fight. Instead she kept her eyes firmly on the ground, foolishly stuck with her undying passion for her husband.

"I'm sorry, too." Obi-Wan offered gently. His words of sympathy resonated deeply with her. Whether he was disappointed or he simply felt pity for her, it was the most devastating offer of empathy. Because she knew in her heart that Obi-Wan would have helped them but she stubbornly let Anakin lead as she loyally followed.

*So much, so young, I faced on my own
Walls I built up, became my home
I'm strong and I'm sure there's a fire in us
Sweet love, so pure*

*I catch my breath, we're just one beating heart
And I brace myself
Please, don't tear this apart*

Padme was frozen on her couch, her hands pressed against her belly. She couldn't digest it all. Obi-Wan had to be misinformed. When her husband came home and held her in his arms like he did by the lake on Naboo, she could feel his heart, she could feel his love for her. He was so ready to be a father. With his paternal instincts kicking in, there's no way he'd take the lives of younglings.

He's a good man who fought endlessly for the ones he loved. Because when he loved, he loved hard. Was it possible for a man who loved that deeply to hate that deeply?

Her memories with Anakin ran rampant in her mind. Reminiscing about the side of him that she knew so well. The side that could never do the things Obi-Wan claimed he did.

And one memory stood out. Perhaps the last memory, she could think of, where they were truly happy.

Anakin lied in bed that night, reading a book on his datapad while Padme slept beside him.

She kept fidgeting in her sleep, tossing and turning.

"What's wrong?" He looked over, his hand rubbed her belly.

"Nothing." She moaned out, sleepily.

Anakin put down his datapad and turned to lie down with her. "Talk to me." He whispered, pulling her in for a hug.

Padme remained silent, closing her eyes as his arms wrapped around her.

“Come on.” He motivated, kissing her cheek, and Padme eventually faced him.

“I just — I don’t know what to think anymore.” She whined. “I wish I could be as optimistic as you but I can’t.”

Her eyes glazed over the ceiling — trying to quieten her mind.

“Why not?” He rasped, brushing her hair out of her face. The subtlety and softness in his deep voice was soothing as he encouraged her to let it out.

“I don’t see how we’ll ever go back to normal.” She released an exhale. ‘What is this world that we’re bringing kids into. . .into war? They don’t deserve this... What kind of future will they have if their first glimpse into this world is full of death and destruction. I don’t see how the republic will ever bounce back.’ She closed her eyes for a moment. “...How can I be sure that our baby will be okay?”

“Padme,” He sighed. “You’re freaking out. You worry way too much.”

She pulled herself up to sit upright and scoffed. “Anakin, that’s not exactly comforting right now—”

*“—But,” He interrupted, one side of his lips curved into a half smile as he sat up as well. “It’s **because** you freak out and because you worry that I know our baby will be fine. Because our kid has you, and you’re gonna make sure they’re fine.”*

She glanced over at him, equally moved and irritated.

“That’s probably the worst, and best, thing you could say to a pregnant woman.” She groaned.

“Well, what do you expect from the worst, and best, husband?” He grinned

*“No...” She shot him a heartfelt smile before interjecting, “—I mean, don’t get me wrong, you’re a mess, Anakin Skywalker but. . .so am I.” She chuckled lightly. “And you’re **my** mess.”*

Her hand reached out to stroke his cheek, she leaned in to lightly touch his lips with hers.

“You’re perfect.” He affirmed, holding her gaze. “And I wouldn’t have you any other way. Neuroticism and all.” He smirked.

And she laughed with mock astonishment. “Pot meet kettle.”

He grabbed her waist, dragging her down to rest her back onto the mattress as he slumped himself over her. He then showered her with kisses. Replenishing her with every touch of his lips on hers, every stroke of his finger on her skin — and, as his ragged breaths stained her lips, she felt free of her fears, safe from the outside world, and wildly alive in the moment with him. His hand delicately cradled her neck, protectively, as his tongue entered her mouth — like he would always shield the most vulnerable parts of her from harm.

“You’re gonna be an amazing mother.” He drawled in quiet amazement.

He was so gentle, so loving, she thought. That's the man she knew. And she knew him better than anyone.

And then she remembered what she thought the first time they ever made love.

How could someone who was so fierce, so aggressive and dangerous to others, be so tender with her?

Did he always have a dark side? Sure he could be aggressive in battle. And anyone with that kind of power with the force would be seen as dangerous, fierce. But that doesn't make him a bad man, does it? Besides nothing was all good or all bad. If there's one thing she's learned from this war, it's that.

No. She refused to give her doubts another second of her time. *I know I can trust him. I've held him many times, I know his heart, his mind, his body and soul. He has given me children. I know him. I know I can trust him. **I trust him.***

She convinced herself.

*I found a man I can trust
And boy, I believe in us
I am terrified to love for the first time
Can't you see that I'm bound in chains?
I finally found my way
I am bound to you*

Padme flew over to Mustafar, not knowing Obi-Wan was on board.

She leaned back on her seat once she landed, preparing herself. Suddenly she didn't feel as confident. No matter what happens now, she knew everything was about to change.

She sat there, unable to move. She couldn't get up. If she stood up and headed out now, that would be it. She'd have to face the music.

Would he tell her they're wrong? Would he relieve her of her fears? Prove that this was all a crazy misunderstanding? Or would all her worst nightmares come to life?

There was only one certainty — she couldn't break the chain.

And so she wanted just a moment longer in the silence. . .with the unknown.

She glanced up and noticed him running out to meet her, and she inhaled a deep breath.

I trust him, she whispered to herself before getting up to finally face him — hoping he'd be her protector now when she needed him most.

*Suddenly the moment's here
I embrace my fears*

*All that I have been carrying all these years
Do I risk it all?*

Come this far just to fall?

*I am, oh, I am
I'm bound to you*

36. Fix You

AN:

DS2010: Yea it is :(

Fix You

High up above or down below

When you're too in love to let it go

But if you never try, you'll never know

Just what you're worth

Padme rushed over to her husband, falling apart in his arms once she felt swept up in his virility. Her hands gripped onto his arms.

“What are you doing out here?” Vader asked, roughly, as he searched her eyes.

“I had to see you!” She insisted, breathlessly, holding onto him tightly. Her worrisome eyes were glistening, holding back a tear as she gazed up at him. She reached up to caress his cheek lightly, holding onto this moment where she could simply look at him as the man she remembered — before any words were spoken. She offered a light smile as a tear began to roll down her cheek.

“What’s wrong?” He probed sternly.

She buried her head in his broad chest, closing her eyes. His hand caressed the back of her head, his fingers massaged her scalp, comforting her.

“Say it’s not true.” She whispered as she breathed in his scent.

“What?” He murmured.

“Tell me you didn’t do it.” Her voice sounded more deliberate. Her hands rose up to his chest, clutching onto his Jedi robes.

“Do what?” He groaned, impatiently — immediately emotionally reacting to the urgency in her voice and the desperate grip in which her fingers held his robes.

She finally looked back up at him, and took a deep breath. “...attack the Jedi temple.”

Vader’s jaw clenched. “Who told you that?”

With glazed eyes, Padme's gaze lowered to the ground, not focused on anything.

"It doesn't matter." She said with a shrug.

"Of course it matters!" He barked before taking a step back. 'Let me guess. . .Obi-Wan.' He scoffed to himself when she didn't reply. "He's trying to turn you against me."

"No. No, he cares about us." She assured, taking a step forward, narrowing the distance he just created.

"Us?" He emphasized, crinkling his forehead, unamused.

"He knows." Her hands reached out to nurture him, squeezing his arms. "He knows everything. He wants to help us."

"We don't need him." Vader said with burgeoning frustration, growing more and more irritated by Obi-Wan's involvement in his personal life.

"We do, Anakin." Padme's wistful tone was beginning to sound more impatient. "Take a look around! Everything's fallen apart. Palpatine has taken over. The people are all rallying behind him! Cheering for the death of their own freedom!"

"You don't need to worry about Palpatine." Vader spoke calmly.

"I have all the authority now." He continued. His voice and mannerisms became slightly more enthusiastic as he wallowed in his options. "I'm more powerful than him — I'm more powerful than any Jedi. I can overthrow him. And you and I can take over."

Padme stood there motionless, shocked at what she was witnessing. The man standing before her, spouting the clichés of a power-hungry tyrant, did not share the sentiments of the husband she knew and loved.

"Rule the galaxy together... Padme, we can do whatever we want!" He urged.

She stepped back, gradually walking further away from him, trying to make sense of what was happening. "But I don't *want* that. . .and since when do you?"

Vader grew annoyed at her resistance.

"Don't you see what I've done?" He snapped. "I did all this for the republic — for peace — for *you*!"

Aghast, Padme's eyes teared up as she shook her head. "What happened to *our* plan? Naboo?" She panicked, sniveling as uncontrollable inhalations muffled her voice. "We were gonna start fresh." She cried.

Her hands began to flail about hysterically. "You *promised* me!"

"Padme, we don't have to hide anymore!" Vader made an effort to sound reassuring but his words came out aggressively.

Padme's hand covered her mouth. She closed her eyes, allowing the tears to stream freely as she accepted the glaring truth.

"Oh you did it." She mewled to herself, turning away from him in defeat. Her heart ached the more she pondered over the revelation. She placed her hand on her chest, trying to breathe

as it stung her. “Oh you did it all, didn’t you?” She wished so badly it wasn’t true.

She finally looked up at him, desperate for salvation. “Who are you?!”

“I’m me.” He huffed, irritably. “I’m your husband.”

“No — no, you’re not.” Her words sounded like a plea. This *wasn’t* him.

She turned away once more, roaming about aimlessly, trying to catch her breath and calm her nerves.

“Where you going?” He hissed.

“I can’t.” She whispered, almost to herself. “I can’t look at you.” And he realized, she wasn’t going to stand by him... She was leaving him.

Vader’s jaw tightened, clenching his fist, as he tried to keep his anger contained, fretting. “Don’t you dare walk away from me.”

He walked right up to her, in a panic, leaving little room for her to brush past him. “I have done everything for you!” He roared. “Have I not given you everything you wanted? Have I not protected you?!”

With him hovering over her, yelling at her, she couldn’t hear him anymore. She had tuned out. His hot breath hitting her face as he spoke harshly and his eyes shooting daggers at her.

Padme had no fight left in her in this moment. She was left unable to conjure up a shred of energy. Her eyes vacant as she glanced up at him, exasperated, taking a step back. “This is all for me?” She asked, doubtful.

The bleak expression on her face stared out into space.

“Then stop.” She whined, effortlessly — unable to shake off this feeling of inertia. “Put a stop to all of it.” She challenged.

“Padme—” He said roughly.

She began to tear up again once she heard her name leave his lips. That raspy voice once soft with affection now sounded so foreign.

She dragged her feet closer to him.

“—Leave with me.” She beseeched, trying once more to connect to the man he used to be. Her hands reached for him, pawing at his hair strands. “Choose me and our baby and our life.” She cradled his face, forcing him to face her. “Leave all this behind.”

He tilted his head to one side, gazing into her eyes, not wanting to see her cry — equally as distraught as he watched her heart break, knowing that he couldn’t say what she wanted him to. His left hand lifted to cradle her face. His thumb wiping away her tears — his fingertips soaking them up.

“Please.” She begged urgently, slapping his chest. “Please tell me you’re in there somewhere!”

He was just about to wrap her in his arms, considering the idea of letting it all go and running off with her since she wouldn’t stay.

Until he glanced up and found Obi-Wan standing before them.

“So you can tell Obi-Wan?” He growled quietly as his rage began to burn fiercely within him — not taking his eyes off of his master, who stood vigilantly in the doorway of her ship.

And the tears come streaming down your face

When you lose something you can't replace

When you love someone, but it goes to waste

Could it be worse?

“What?” She nervously looked up at him. Her eyes wide in shock and despair.

“You’re with him?” Vader’s voice was barely audible, blindsided by the betrayal. His eyes now painfully glared at her as he slowly placed his hands over hers that cradled his face. He removed her hands off of him and began to step away from her.

Padme glanced from him to Obi-Wan erratically.

“No!” She gasped.

“You’re in this together, is that it?” He spat, unable to look at her. He felt physically sick.

“No! Come back!” She pleaded, rushing back over to him. She reached up, grabbing his shoulders, forcing him to face her.

His eyes lowered to meet hers.

“How could you do this to me?” He let out a mournful sigh. His brittle voice sounded like both a groan and a plea. His eyes now began to well up with tears. His wife — his angel — brought Obi-Wan here. He trusted her completely, even at times when he said he didn’t out of sheer pettiness, he did. And now she’s betrayed him.

“I didn’t — I love you!” She wailed. He tried to resist her arms as she continued to try and bring him back. Her fingers entwined in his before he finally broke off contact.

“Anakin, you know I love you.” She reminded, nervously. Her imploring eyes begging him to snap out of his paranoia.

His eyes held hers. Staring at each other hopelessly, fearfully, not breaking eye contact. He too shed tears as he watched her once comforting brown eyes plead with him. He couldn’t take it anymore. He couldn’t listen to her for another second.

Overcome with fiery rage, heartbreak, and devastation the more she went on, he raised his arm up, and began to force-choke her.

“Stop lying to me!” He snapped, shutting his eyes in anger, as tears streamed down his cheek. He just wanted to silence her — silence her lying mouth.

Trembling with fear at the sight of her unconscious body, unable to process how far his temper could take him, his now soulless eyes turned to Obi-Wan who was mortified.

And now Obi-Wan realized more than ever that he had to face his brother, and be the father he failed to be.

When you try your best, but you don't succeed

When you get what you want, but not what you need

When you feel so tired, but you can't sleep

Stuck in reverse

Vader and Padme both lying on cold operating tables, crying out for the other, as each felt the other's pain.

Crippled by the anguish of having to endure it without the other by their side — their frayed connection struggled to resonate.

Their passion for one another smolders through their bodies as their voices cry out in regret, praying for another chance to set it right.

Padme takes her last breath, uttering her faith in Anakin, hoping he would return. But she could only fend off the stress on her heart and body long enough to give her children life.

Twins... to balance out the shroud of darkness, the Sith's master and apprentice, as always two, there are. The force always finds a way...

And Padme evoked the heavenly light in her children. Luke being the light; Leia being heaven. Knowing she couldn't hold on much longer, Padme gave them all her strength.

Vader was now fully immersed in his suit. The suit that would become his eternal metal prison. Oh how he fell from grace thanks to his pride and anger — now survived only through the confines of his own prison.

"Where is Padme?" He uttered. His voice now operated through a machine.

A mechanical voice, hindered vision, and a body full of scars and burns so intense that so little of Anakin remained — there was nothing familiar about himself. He felt like a stranger in his own body. His voice will never carry the same power without machines; he'd never see his own face without the marks of this fateful night. He'd never be able to feel anything or anyone at his fingertips. The last thing he felt at the tip of his fingers was his wife's tears and his brother's skin when he tried to strangle him.

"Is she safe? Is she alright?"

"It seems in your anger, you killed her." Palpatine sympathized — or perhaps what he was expressing was, in fact, pity.

"She was alive! I felt it!" Vader grew frantic with fear, fury, worry and panic, realizing he could no longer feel her. He couldn't feel their connection. It had been severed. He could no longer feel her alive.

In a fit of rage, he broke out of his restraints, smashing everything in his sight.

Palpatine felt a sense of satisfaction, watching his apprentice's power in full swing... until he was the subject of Vader's rage.

Vader force-pushed Palpatine, slamming him against the wall. "You vowed to keep her safe!"

But before he could utter another word, Palpatine shot him with lighting.

"Listen here." He growled, walking over to a fallen Vader, who was pulling himself back up.

"Make no mistake, my young apprentice. *You* chose this. *You* picked power over her."

Vader could feel his heart pounding in his chest.

"We're not so different, you and I." Palpatine continued with a sneer. "Destroying those who dared to get in your way..."

Palpatine was just about to leave but not before he offered one last pearl of wisdom.

"Buckle up, Lord Vader. . .it's lonely at the top."

Vader dropped to his knees, struggling to breathe. He couldn't stomach a life without *her*.

Tears stream down your face

When you lose something you cannot replace

Tears stream down your face

I promise you I will learn from my mistakes

As Luke's eyes held his father's, he realized he was no longer looking at Darth Vader but at Anakin. There was life in his eyes again.

And Anakin could finally feel his connection to Padme that was severed decades ago.

He gazed up at Luke, who was the perfect blend of his parents.

He believed in me, Anakin thought as he smiled at his son through his own eyes. After everything, he had it in him to embrace compassion. He found a way to be a better Jedi than any of us. He found something stronger than power, deeper than the force. He found unconditional love. And he gave it to me, allowing me to fulfill my destiny as the chosen one.

*He guided me to end the nightmare. I broke his mother's heart and yet he forgives me. He still loves me. I cannot be redeemed for all my sins but I can be redeemed in his eyes. He gave me the chance to be the father I never had. He gave me the gift of family. He truly was the light. **My** light.*

"Father, I've got to get you out of here. I've got to save you!"

"You already have." Anakin rasped, proudly beaming up at him as he could feel the warmth of another person on his face — the warmth of someone he loves. "You set me free... Now I can finally be with your mother."

Lights will guide you home

And ignite your bones

And I will try to fix you

Fix You — Coldplay

37. Wildest Dreams

Wildest Dreams

*He said, let's get out of this town
Drive out of the city, away from the crowds
I thought, heaven can't help me now
Nothing lasts forever
But this is gonna take me down*

*He's so tall and handsome as hell
He's so bad but he does it so well
I can see the end as it begins
My one condition is...*

Vader arrived at his and Padme's old apartment on Coruscant shortly after finding out their son was alive.

The home was covered in dust that had accumulated over the years, the furniture experienced some wear and tear, and the colours of the walls and carpeting appeared duller than he remembered. It was clear no one had lived here in a long time.

But the further he stepped foot in the apartment, the more familiar it got. Suddenly it felt like no time had passed. The shades of blue and beige were vibrant again. The wood tables restored, the surfaces clean — just like it was when there was life inside.

He glanced around, doing a double take at the couch. He wasn't alone. The once empty couch now had Anakin and Padme curled up with a blanket on it.

Vader blinked — watching them cuddle. Was he hallucinating?

He then heard rattling in the kitchen. He turned around to inspect the noise only to find another Padme cooking in the kitchen with Anakin behind her, his hand resting on her hip as she looked up at him and gave him a kiss.

And Vader realized, these were his memories. He remembered that day vividly. It was in the early days of their marriage. He had a couple days free and he snuck over to her. It was the first time she cooked for him.

Vader began to roam about the place, picturing their memories wherever he went.

There they were again — this time, the couple were dancing on the balcony. And she was wearing that dress he loved on her.

Suddenly it got harder to be here, watching his old life. It really did feel like a lifetime ago.

He turned away from the living room, now wanting to block it out. He was surrounded by Anakins and Padmes and it started to feel suffocating.

He ran into the bathroom to get a moment to reset his mind. He knew it was all in his head and as always his mind was stronger than him.

He looked up at himself in the mirror — well, at the mask — the mask that reminded him everyday of the choice he made two decades ago.

Then, at the bottom left corner of the mirror, he spotted yet another Padme and Anakin taking a bath. She rested over him, the back of her head leaned back on his chest as their bodies were covered in bubbles.

Vader stormed out of the bathroom and headed into the bedroom.

*I said, no one has to know what we do
His hands are in my hair, his clothes are in my room
And his voice is a familiar sound
Nothing lasts forever
But this is getting good now*

*He's so tall and handsome as hell
He's so bad but he does it so well
And when we've had our very last kiss
My last request is...*

Once Vader entered their bedroom — within these walls were his most intimate moments with her — he sat down on the bed, and took a gander. It all looked the same for the most part — just stripped of everything that made it home.

But then, there was one memory that stood out. Perhaps the last memory, before she died, where they were truly happy.

He grabbed her waist, dragging her down to rest her back onto the mattress as he slumped himself over her. He then showered her with kisses. Replenishing her with every touch of his lips on hers, every stroke of his finger on her skin — and, as his ragged breaths stained her lips, she felt free of her fears, safe from the outside world, and wildly alive in the moment with him. His hand delicately cradled her neck, protectively, as his tongue entered her mouth — like he would always shield the most vulnerable parts of her from harm.

"You're gonna be an amazing mother." He drawled in quiet amazement.

"I hope so." She breathed out, smiling at him.

"I know so." He insisted as his lips brushed against hers once more. "Hell, I'll put some more babies in you to prove it. Twins, triplets — we can make as many as you like." He

smirked, as his body writhed about with hers, pressing his hips onto hers.

“...I’ve always wanted a little girl.” Padme sighed, pleasantly, twirling a finger in the strands of his hair behind his ear. “I’d style her hair, dress her in cute little outfits. . .teach her how to use a blaster.” She expressed with artful innocence.

And Anakin chuckled softly with a nod of approval. The tip of his nose brushed against the tip of hers, as they smiled against each other’s lips.

“What we gonna call her?” He wondered after a beat.

“I, sort of, already have a couple of names picked out.” She said in a light, casual tone, and Anakin’s arms held himself up, taking his weight off of her, listening intently. “Lelani or Leia.” She added.

“Both derived from the word ‘heaven.’” She explained affectionately.

“Hmm.” Anakin pretended to ponder. “Well... Lelani’s a bit of a mouthful. But Leia. . .that’s good.” He shot her a fond look, and his lips curled into a vivacious smile — and that had her beaming up at him with rosy cheeks.

“Heaven, huh?” He echoed. His fingers trailed along the side of her face, moving her hair out of her eyes. “A little angel, just like her mother.”

“But,” He sighed. “If she **looks** anything like her mother, I’m gonna have my work cut out for me.” He jokingly groaned, and Padme playfully nudged him.

“Relax! You’re gonna do just fine.” She chuckled, propping herself up on her elbows. “You’re gonna be a wonderful dad. . .because you’re so protective and attentive.” Her soothing eyes proudly gazed up at him.

“—maybe not so patient.” She revised, teasingly. “On second thought, yeah — you’re gonna have a hard time with a daughter.”

Anakin rolled his eyes, as Padme went on. “And she’s not gonna like your possessiveness. You better work on that. Or. . .guess we can rest assured she won’t date until she’s 25.” She suggested with an amused shrug.

Anakin crinkled his nose. “Eh, 30.” He corrected with a grin.

“Don’t be like that.” She gently warned with a giggle. And Anakin puffed his chest.

With his steadfast gaze on her, he grabbed her, pulling her onto him as he rolled onto his back. His arms wrapped around her waist as she hovered over him.

“That’s just who I am.” He rasped. And she almost groaned at his typical cavalier attitude and arrogance — pretending that his charm didn’t make her feel giddy. “Possessive, vindictive. . .yet tender.” He smirked up at her.

“Tender?” There was a hint of sarcasm in her laugh. “Well, you do have your moments.” She winked.

She couldn’t take her eyes off of him, engulfed by the fire in his, as he looked at her the way he always looked at her — with such fervor. She lowered her lips onto his. And a soft moan left her lips once she tasted him. His hand now in her hair, the other resting on the

small of her back, holding her on top of him — refusing to let her go. Her body fitting so perfectly over his. Their smoldering passion for one another following through them. Looking upon each other with insatiable admiration, for only when they are together can ecstasy exist. Without one, the other didn't exist. They escape together in intoxication because love protects you from reality, it protects you from age, and it protects you from death — it revives your soul even after your body is long gone. There is a fire in his heart that yearns and burns brightly for hers, and her heart provokes that flame — it would never die out — she would always choose to be his. She would rather die than be robbed of his magic.

*You'll see me in hindsight
Tangled up with you all night
Burning it down
Someday when you leave me
I bet these memories
Follow you around*

Vader arrived on Naboo. It was the first time he had been here without her. It had been a rough few days ever since he left Polis Massa. He was determined to find out who hid his son from him. He had even just threatened his ex sister-in-law to find out whether she hid the baby from him.

And now he was finally face to face with his wife's grave. It was the first time he came to see her.

There was no sign, no mention of the life they shared. Her tombstone so vague — listing her as a beloved senator and former queen. But she was so much more than that to him. And even though he couldn't share that with the world, it was nice keeping that to himself.

He fell to his knees before the monument as he began to weep. His heart started to ache an unbearable pain that he had tried to avoid for so long. He finally allowed himself to feel it as he remembered their love...

The pain and torture of losing Padme Amidala. The physical pain he felt over how much he missed her. How hard it is to go on without her. And the guilt and shame of not being able to be with her.

"I'm so sorry, Padme." He whimpered. His voice a broken, feeble cry trapped in his mask. "For all of it."

And in this moment, he realized he had no one else to blame. There was no monster controlling him. In fact, there was no Vader. There was only him. Anakin Skywalker. His choices. His actions. He did it all. Because he didn't want to believe he had a dark side, he couldn't accept that he *was* the monster — *is* the monster.

And so he not only created Vader, he was *always* him. Vader was his dark side and he let it overshadow his light. His pride, his anger, his fear, all the things he couldn't control eventually took over.

So he pretended they were two different personas. And right now he realized why.

It was why he told Obi-Wan that Anakin is gone. Because he couldn't accept that he was Anakin Skywalker, the man that lost everything. He couldn't live knowing that he was the man who lost her. So this was his coping mechanism, deciding that Anakin had died that day on Mustafar with her. When she was gone, the light in him was gone.

And he realized he got the idea from her all along — it was something she referred to a long time ago.

"It's better to die a good man. . .than live forever as a monster." Vader drawled before getting back up.

And he finally walked away, knowing that Anakin's former life and his memories with Padme will continue to live on only in his memory — in his wildest dreams — and in his cherished children.

*Say you'll remember me
Standing in a nice dress
Staring at the sunset, babe
Red lips and rosy cheeks*

*Say you'll see me again
Even if it's just in your
Wildest dreams*

Wildest Dreams — Taylor Swift

38. Epilogue

Epilogue

*Every night in my dreams
I see you, I feel you
That is how I know you go on
Far across the distance
And spaces between us
You have come to show you go on*

It wasn't long until the the entire galaxy were rejoicing at the fall of the Empire and the return of liberty. For Luke, however, the night was bittersweet as he laid his father to rest, burning Vader's armor — the last parental figure he had.

Leia, who was celebrating the rebels' victory, noticed Luke taking a moment for himself. Unlike him, Leia never made a connection to her birth father and had no desire to. She already had a great one, Bail Organa. Perhaps that was something Anakin had to make peace with in the afterlife — he was never going to be redeemed in his daughter's eyes.

But Luke, who had spent his whole life wanting to know who his father was, had a soulful connection to Anakin, believed there was still good in him, and was able to reach in and pull him out of the darkness.

Luke then glanced up and saw the Force spirits of Jedi before him. Obi-Wan, Yoda and Anakin — all here to honour Luke, the new hope not just for the Skywalker family or the Jedi but for the Galaxy.

Leia joined her brother, wrapping her arms around him, letting him know she was here for him. He turned to face her and smiled — as he realized, he still had one family member left. He had *her*.

*Love can touch us one time
And last for a lifetime*

*In my life, we'll always go on
Near, far, wherever you are
I believe that the heart does go on*

Anakin walked along a familiar pier — one that he had frequented in many of his dreams.

Along the sides of the pier were all the souls who had passed before him. Making his way down, spotting many Jedi and Clones on either side, everyone he ever cared for. He abruptly stopped, taking it all in with a heartfelt smile, as he passed his brother Obi-Wan, his first father-figure Qui-Gon and eventually his mother, Shmi Skywalker...

Running over to hug his mother, a tear streamed down his cheek. He was so much taller than her now. She cradled his face and shot him a loving smile.

He then heard a familiar voice travel through the air.

"My love,"

He looked around and began making his way toward the end of the pier, urgently following the voice.

Once he got there, just like in the dreams he had before, the end of the pier looked like the Naboo lake retreat's balcony.

And there she was...

Standing by the railing with a glowing grin that lit up the sky, Padme gestured for him to come to her.

He scurried over to her and placed his hand on her cheek — he could *feel* her at the tip of his fingers. He could smell her perfume again.

His hands slid around her waist as hers trailed up his arms to rest on his shoulders.

"Told you I'd find you again." She cooed.

His lips curved into a smile, pulling her close.

And finally their lips touched.

*You're here, there's nothing I fear
And I know that my heart will go on
We'll stay forever this way
You are safe in my heart
And my heart will go on and on*

AN: Thank you so much DS2010 and TroySharpay for the reviews! And a huge thank you to everyone who stuck around for this story. I so appreciate all your support.

I've had SO much fun writing for these two, I'm already working on another :D

I hope you had as much fun reading it as I did writing it XOXO